

Preparations – Chapter 37 – Ft. Leonard Wood

“You probably haven’t moved that fast since Kathy pulled her bra off,” Ron managed between brays.

“Clarence that was mean,” Gary said.

“What goes around comes around Gary,” Clarence laughed.

The horseplay over, the three old geezers set up a table and got the radios setup and turned on. They weren’t short on radios and decided that it would be easier to have one radio on each ‘channel’. Considering the seriousness of the situation the squads were going to be in, up close to those troops and FEMA folks, they decided to do the 16-on 8-off routine they’d talked about back at the OP at one time. Ron could be off first because he needed a shower anyway. The squads had 2-meter handhelds for squad communications and a 10-meter mobile radio and battery pack for longer-range communications. They would be using the codes Derek had worked up and given to his Dad previously on the 10-meter radios and a form of shorthand each squad had worked out on the 2-meters, earplug and throat mike equipped squad radios.

There wasn’t any radio traffic for a while. Then, Doc radioed the code for ‘on site and commencing patrol’. Later, Becky and Derek radioed in within minutes of each other with the same radio code. The map the old geezers were using came off the Internet. Gary had brought up one of the map websites and zoomed in on the Fort, printing each section. Then, they had pasted the sections together to form a 2’x3’ map of the post. It didn’t really show any detail, but each squad had a copy of the map and Gary had drawn a grid on the original before they made the copies for the squads. It wasn’t perfect, but you made do with the resources you had. Finally, after dark, Roy radioed in that he was ‘on site and commencing patrol’.

Maybe patrol was a misnomer. There were 12 people in each squad. They weren’t moving in a group, but were spread out along the perimeter of their area of operations observing. When Roy had called in, that meant that the last individual was in place, about a 25-mile hike from their position. There were 48 people spread out along the nearly 40-mile perimeter of the post. Roy had the most dangerous assignment, too, being up by the main gate.

“Ok Clarence, get some sleep and I’ll spend some time getting even with Gar-Bear,” Ron said.

“Darn it Ron, that was a dirty trick you pulled on me,” Gary laughed, “Sometimes we get carried away a bit with our humor.”

“You no more expected a red head named Daisy Mae to be here than what, hell I can’t think what,” Ron said.

“True, but you didn’t have to make fun of me just to tell me the truth, did you?” Gary said. “I will have to say though that your wife is pretty good in bed, or so several people have told me.”

“Oh really?” Ron said, “I wouldn’t know.”

The two pals went on for the entire 8 hours like this, trying to get each other’s goat with lies and anything they could say to get a rise out of each other. But, they had been friends too long and they were probably just repeating themselves. Clarence listened to the two of them before he dropped off. One of these days, one of them was going to say the wrong thing at the wrong time and there would be fireworks for sure. That had happened already, Clarence just didn’t know about it. It had happened when Ron tried to dissuade Gary from divorcing Sharon over what Kathy kept stuffed in her bra. Gary had told Ron off, clearly and succinctly, and they hadn’t talked to each other for over a year. Nope, Clarence was wrong this time.

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11Apr05...0900...Mt. Weather...

“So, are they all assembled at Ft. Leonard Wood and Camp LeJeune?” General Wesley Clark asked.

“Yes sir,” the officer said. “May I ask the General what he has in mind concentrating our forces like this?”

“Why, is there something wrong with my plan?” Clark snapped.

“Only that we don’t know what your plan is General. I’m sure it’s a perfectly good plan, but we need just a hint of what it is,” the officer replied.

“I’ll let you know when you need to know Major,” Clark responded, “We have to maintain operational security, you know.”

“Yes sir,” the Major replied, “Will there be anything else sir?”

“So you think it is a good plan, huh?” Clark said.

“I’m sure it’s a perfectly good plan General,” the Major repeated.

“Glad to hear that Major, Dismissed,” Clark smiled.

“I sure wished the Colonel hadn’t po’d the General,” the Major thought, “Now I’m stuck doing the handholding with this crazy SOB. His operational security is so tight that only he knows what the plan is. It reminds me of the Normandy invasion when they didn’t dare wake up Hitler to get the tanks released to repel the invasion. A lot of those troops

with their misplaced loyalties are going to end up dying.”

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There wasn't much to see during the nighttime. They had all of night vision equipment they needed, but when people didn't move, there was nothing to report. Consequently, the night was occasionally punctuated with a call like unit 4, 10-9. Meanwhile the people on patrol were filling in details on their copy of the map. This was going to be a long week unless something happened. The beauty of 10-meters is that with a proper antenna and power it reaches a long ways. The Pep Boys were able to monitor most of the calls from the three old geezers and occasionally picked up a call from one of the squads. This situation was changing rapidly because they were getting closer. They had already cleared the Continental Divide in New Mexico and were now about 4,000 strong.

“Unit 2-11 925,” came over the radio. Derek replied to Becky, asking 910 and received a 10-4 followed shortly by a 2-11 code 100 and minutes later by Code 4 plus DOA.

“What the hell does that all mean?” Ron asked.

“925 is suspicious person, 910 is can you handle, 10-4 is...” Gary started to explain.

“I know what 10-4 is butthead,” Ron said.

“2-11 is our guy, don't know which one, code 100 is in position to intercept and Code 4 is no further assistance necessary and DOA means the SOB is dead,” Gary concluded.

“Oh,” Ron said, “Do cops really talk like that?”

“How should I know?” Gary said, “They did on that TV show, COPS.”

“All units, Pep Boys halfway plus 4,000,” Gary updated the squad leaders.

“You know partner, no more radio traffic than there is, I figure we can handle it with one person,” Ron said, “Why don't you get some sleep?”

“I wish that you'd told me that 10 minutes ago,” Gary said, “I just took 2 Sudafed.”

“Your nose plugged up?” Ron asked.

“No, I took it to stay awake,” Gary said. “Now I'd have to double up on the Xanax and you wouldn't be able to get me up in the morning. So, I guess I'll just stay up.”

“You're a real pill head, do you know that?” Ron said.

“What do you mean, you take more pills than I do,” Gary replied defensively.

“Yeah, but you take Benadryl and Xanax and sometimes Sudafed,” Ron said.

“Benadryl replaces the prescriptions I had for 2 allergy pills, one cost \$150 a month and the other \$250 a month; Xanax lets me sleep and when I have to stay up I take generic Sudafed, big deal,” Gary said “Your just jealous because 100 Benadryl is 5 bucks, 100 Xanax is 10 bucks and the Sudafed is 4 bucks for 200. I don’t have to take all of those expensive prescriptions for a lot of things.”

“I don’t spend anything on prescriptions,” Ron said.

“Maybe, but you’re running out of physicians samples, same as me,” Gary said. “What are you going to do when you run out? I can up my insulin and get by with just laying off the salt, old buddy old pal.”

“Well, if you’re not going to bed, I am,” Ron said, “Ciao.”

Gary was sure glad when Clarence relieved him, the Sudafed had worn off and he was gulping coffee to stay awake. There hadn’t been any more radio traffic except for the occasional 10-8.

“Morning Clarence,” Gary said.

“Good morning Gary, where’s Ron?” Clarence asked.

“Went to bed,” Gary replied, “Let him sleep 6 more hours and then roll his butt out of bed.”

“Any action?” Clarence asked.

“Pep Boys are halfway here with 4,000 people and one of Becky’s people killed some guy,” Gary said, “Other than that it has been pretty quiet. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight Gary, you sleep well, you hear,” Clarence said.

Gary took his Xanax and crawled into his sleeping bag. His last thought before he drifted off was, “How in the hell are 5 or 10 thousand people going to take on a few hundred thousand trained American soldiers and Guardsmen?”

It was a fair question. Carlos Hathcock had killed 300 Vietnamese, but not all in one sitting. And they were outnumbered about 50 or 100 to 1. This was going to require some real innovation if they were to get out of this one with their hides intact. They didn’t have enough Claymores to seed a 40-mile perimeter or even a 4-mile perimeter. They had enough ammo, but only if some of those soldiers stood still and let them shoot them one by one. And, not all of the Patriots were snipers, not by a long shot. Well, it had seemed like a good idea at the time, hadn’t it? And, what was good old Wesley Clark planning?

He had the Air Force with their bombers and fighters and all of those attack helicopters.

What Wes didn't have was the troops at Ft. Bragg/Pope AFB or Ft. Benning Georgia or Ft. Stewart Georgia or Ft. Hood Texas. And, by golly, they had a couple of helicopters themselves. Not to mention a whole lot of arty and Abrams and those Patriot missile batteries over at Ft. Bliss. Besides, Wes hadn't confided his plans to anyone. Did that mean he didn't have a plan and was playing it by ear? Maybe the Major was right and Wes was just another crackpot like Adolph Hitler. There was a showdown brewing, for sure. The Colonel and some of his friends had put their troops on the move after filling them in on what was really going on at Mt. Weather. They had more volunteers than they could use to liberate Mt. Weather. Not that everyone liked Bush; some did and some didn't, but it was the principle of the thing.

There were two places with large infantry buildups, Camp LeJeune and Ft. Leonard Wood. Then, there were Air Force units all over the place. Wes thought they were all supporting him, and maybe some of them were. That bunch with the C-130's and the GBU-43/B (MOAB) weren't on his side.

CNN had reported on the March 11, 2003 test of MOAB. They pointed out two very interesting things: 1) "The goal is to have the pressure be so great that Saddam Hussein cooperates," Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters. "Short of that – an unwillingness to cooperate – the goal is to have the capabilities of the coalition so clear and so obvious that there is an enormous disincentive for the Iraqi military to fight against the coalition;" and, 2) "But military officials tell CNN that the MOAB is mainly conceived as a weapon employed for 'psychological operations.' Military officials say they hope the MOAB will create such a huge blast that it will rattle Iraq troops and pressure them into surrendering or not even fighting. Officials suggest perhaps the Iraqis might even mistake a MOAB blast for a nuclear detonation."

What CNN was suggesting was that the bomb could be used to scare the crap out of people and not just to kill them. Global Security didn't report any of the bombs in the Air Force inventory, but Global Security was often late reporting the military information. They still listed the Crusader as a viable project, for crying out loud. The Air Force had built a few but had never seen fit to use them. These particular bombs were capable of being detonated at various altitudes ranging from a near ground burst to an airburst at some altitude. The Air Force Colonel in charge of the weapons would only agree to their use for psyops. He didn't mind scaring the crap out of the American troops, but he wasn't going to be a party to killing any of them.

Close enough. There were other weapons in the inventory and not all of the officers were so reticent to use them. Wesley Clark was turning this whole thing into a civil war and it wasn't the north against the south. It was more like the people who believed in the Constitution and all that it stood for against a petty tyrant and the misguided fools who believed in him and bought his lies. The number of misguided fools was on a steady decline, too. Unfortunately the majority of them could be found in Missouri and North Carolina. Not many of the people at Camp LeJeune were Marines, either. The Marines had

all moved to Ft. Bragg/Pope Air Force Base.

Preparations – Chapter 38 – The Fight

When it came to regular Army/Navy/Marines, the Patriots had the edge. The Air Force was sort of undecided at 50-50, but they would probably come around. They were sort of like their planes, they didn't move too fast on the ground, but once they got going...

Neither were all of the National Guard people in Missouri and North Carolina staying convinced. It seemed that the further this thing went, they less sure they were that what they were doing was the right thing. Clark had placed some loyal officers in key positions and the best that could be said of the troops was that they were confused. It didn't seem quite right, but their officers kept telling them that this was the right thing to do. And, they kept up the lie about the Muslims having bombed the 6 cities, and having taken out the natural gas pipeline and electrical substations. (You do remember how this all started don't you?)

Clark hadn't made the mistake of putting Bush back on the radio, either. That bit about Barbara was bad enough, but now his aide was suggesting that the President had done more than just use his mother's name. At the end of his first speech he had said Good Night, not God Bless America and at the end of the second speech, he had said Be of Good Cheer instead of God Bless America. Then, there was this whole 'your government' thing. Bush had only said I one time in his first and second speeches as if to flag something he was telling or about to tell. It was 'I had a revelation' in the first speech and 'Barbara and I' in the second speech. He had half a mind just to shoot old George, but, if this whole thing went south on him because of the inept people supporting him, he'd better have an ace up his sleeve.

He guessed he could understand the ineptitude, not everyone could graduate first of their class at the Point. MacArthur had been leading man in his class at the Point, but look what had happened to him. Maybe it was just MacArthur's bad luck to be the seeking the office at the same time as Eisenhower. Eisenhower had been first in his class of 275 and had been President. George S. Patton was well thought of but he'd only been 46th in his class of 103. Of course that Patton was a crude SOB. A saying attributed to General George Patton was that it took 10 years with troops alone before an officer knew how to empty a bucket of spit. As a serving soldier with 33 years of active duty under his pistol belt, Clark commanded combat units – rifle platoon to tank division – for only seven years. The rest of his career had been spent as an aide, an executive, a student and teacher and a staff weenie. Went to show what Patton knew.

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Ft. Leonard Wood isn't square, it's sort of rectangular and looks a little like Utah standing on its head. That meant the Becky's squad was strung out pretty good and Derek wasn't much better off because he'd kept Damon with him. Damon shouldn't have shot his mouth off; Derek made him carry the 10-meter radio and the scanner that Derek used to monitor the other 3 squads. Isn't brotherly love a wonderful thing?

Just after noon on the 12th of April, the geezers picked up another call from the Pep Boys. They were 200 miles closer and up to 5,000 people. Ron was on the radios by this time and he passed the information on to Derek. He also offered an opinion that they should all use the same channel; this 4-channel business was too cumbersome. Derek contacted the other 3 squads shortly thereafter and everyone switched to channel 4.

For their parts the squad members had been able to finish up their maps. A radio conference ensued and Derek decided to leave 2 sniper teams on the north perimeter to observe and pull everyone back to his aunt's house; it paid in the long-run to be flexible. From what they could see, some of those soldiers at the Ft. were slacking off. It was subtle, but they all had a military background and had, in their times, known a few slackers. There was just something about how a soldier moved when he or she was slacking off; very slowly, for one thing, and sort of like they were on a string and being pulled along. The squads arrived back at the aunt's house at varying times, with Roy's crew arriving last.

This business of soldiers slacking off was a universal problem in the military. Damon called it gun decking. Gun decking really meant signing off on work that hadn't been completed, but the term sort of hand a ring to it, didn't it? Whatever you called it, there was plenty of evidence of it at the Fort. It hadn't taken very long to sense it, either. A demoralized Army is an ineffective Army, just ask George Patton. The odds were that a lot of those soldiers wouldn't fight back when they attacked, but that still left a lot of them to deal with. And, by the time Roy's people had gotten back, Gary was able to report that the Pep Boys were closing in and still growing in numbers.

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13Apr05...

Clark's support was evaporating like water in the noonday sun. The word was getting out about those nukes and when people heard that he was behind the whole set of problems that had beset America on Valentine's Day, admiration of the retired General was rapidly replaced by disgust. It seemed like every intact community has some sort of militia or group of individuals dedicated to getting rid of the SOB and putting Bush back in the Oval Office where he belonged. About the only hard-core supporters that the General had was those folks with FEMA and Homeland Security. Air Force reconnaissance flights were showing a large group moving towards Camp LeJeune and all sorts of groups converging on Ft. Leonard Wood. It wasn't time to get out of Dodge yet, but Clark had his escape plan worked out. He had made a deal with some of the corrupt French businessmen who had been involved in the food for oil scandal in Iraq and was going to head to Europe if this magnificent plan of his met an untimely end. These were people he could count on. He worked with them before, indirectly when he'd been the Commander of NATO.

The MOAB's in the USAF inventory were all stored at the test facility at Eglin ABF. The

Colonel had authorized their being loaded aboard the C-130's and had decided to air-burst the weapons at 3,000 feet, but he wasn't ready to release the aircraft. These days, General officers were kept out of the loop for fear that some of them might be Clark supporters. So far as the Air Forces part in the attack on Ft. Leonard Wood, it would be revealed when they were ready.

As Derek and the squad leader's combined their map data into one complete map, it became apparent the even with the Pep Boys and their minions, and the collapsing morale of the forces at Ft. Leonard Wood, they were in way over their head. Clarence inadvertently made a great suggestion when he tried to get more information about the copperheads in the area.

"Derek how to you kill a copperhead?" Clarence asked.

"You cut off its head Clarence," Derek had responded, almost automatically.

"Thanks Clarence," Derek said after a moment or two, "You've just given me an answer here."

"You're welcome, what was the question?" Clarence asked befuddled.

"How do you kill a snake," Derek replied. "Look people, from what I've seen, it is mostly the officers keeping the troops in line. Why don't we redeploy and start killing off the officers? We have 12 sniper teams and if we hit and move and hit and move, we can surely cause confusion if nothing else."

Admittedly, there were several hundred officers on the post, but it might cause a domino effect and force the officers to avoid putting themselves in harm's way. The nice thing about their sniper rifles was that they were suppressed and not only gave off little sound; they gave off no gun flash. If they started at the top and worked their way down, it might cause indecision, and "*indecision is a virus that can run through an army and destroy its will to win. Or even to survive.*" The Pep Boys were still a couple of days out, maybe 3, so it was worth a shot, if you'll pardon the pun. (The quote was Admiral Nimitz in *In Harm's Way*.)

Derek, Damon and the 11 other sniper teams headed out for the north side of the Fort. They were tired and it was a pretty good hike and Damon was obviously more than a little unhappy.

14Apr05...

It had taken the 12 teams all night and part of the next morning to reach their objective. They were not spread out along the entire north perimeter of the Fort, either. Rather, they had spread out in the area just north of the perimeter and slowly infiltrated into the main post area about 2 miles from the main gate. It was a bear, there were soldiers everywhere. All of the teams gave up during the early afternoon hours to wait for dark when

they could move more freely. It was the 2-month anniversary of the events that had brought the country to its knees and if they had anything to say about it, it would all be over before the 3-month anniversary rolled around. They took turns napping in 2-hour shifts, waiting for dark.

7pm...

It was finally dark enough to move and avoid detection. There were still plenty of soldiers around this early in the evening, but they moved in slowly, circumnavigating buildings and obstacles. By 10pm all of the teams were in place. Derek put out the word. It was weapons free for stars and bars. One of the teams identified what appeared to be either the Officer's Club or an annex set up to provide recreation for the hundreds of officers.

It was like being in an overstocked fishpond with a net. The teams shifted their positions and got on top of buildings allowing them to remain above the lights and shoot down on the unsuspecting officers. It didn't take the officers very long to realize that they were surrounded, but by that time it was too late. Each team had accounted for several officers and had withdrawn before they were discovered. But, rather than withdraw from the post, the teams moved further into its interior, presuming, correctly, that the GI's would search in the direction of the nearest post perimeter.

Ft. Leonard Wood went on full combat alert and soldiers were everywhere. Rather than expose the fact that they had remained on post, the teams took a break, waiting for the furor to die down.

15Apr05...

"Oh darn," Damon whispered to Derek, "I forgot to file my tax return."

"Shh," Derek cautioned, "Hell, you didn't have enough income to have to file."

"No, but I want my refund," Damon insisted.

"Here," Derek said pulling out a \$20 bill, "That ought to cover it, now shut up, would you."

The troops had been up all night and appeared to be tired. The snipers were now in a wooded/brushy area and could see the people without being seen. They were going to incrementally withdraw to Roby and wait on the street corner to waive to the locals (yeah, right). Occasionally an officer would be foolish enough to show him or herself and the teams sent them to meet their maker. After a while, it seemed that some Noncom figured out what they were doing, withdrawing to the south and he began to flood the area with troops. Half the teams headed east and half west, moving off post. The damage was done and the teams returned to Derek's aunt's place, slipping in after dark.

“That went well,” Derek opined.

“Yeah well, I had a \$30 refund coming and I’ve got a blister,” Damon responded.

“I already know about your head, bro,” Derek replied, “But how are your feet holding up?”

The 12 teams had been fairly successful. They had killed fewer than 100 officers, but the Fort was on full alert. They had everyone looking over his or her shoulder, too, especially the officers. The Pep Boys were in the Springfield area and coming on strong with 8,000 people.

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The activity at the Fort had not gone unnoticed. Repositioned Keyhole satellites revealed the chaos that the sniping attacks had caused. Unknown to the small Palmdale militia and the Pep Boys, troops from Texas were just behind the Pep Boys and the troops from North Carolina were west of St. Louis. The Palmdale militia had decided to suspend operations until the Pep Boys got there. They didn’t have long to wait. Just after midnight the Pep Boys showed up 8,400 strong and began to attack the Fort.

“Jeez,” Derek said, “Didn’t you guys get the word to them that the post was on full alert?”

“We tried,” Gary said, “But we couldn’t rai...”

There was a huge flash of light followed almost immediately by a ka-boom that literally shook the ground.

“Nuke,” Gary yelled as he dove for the ground. The phenomenon was repeated over and over, occurring a total of 12 times. The sound was followed almost immediately by lesser explosions; sounds with which Derek was very familiar.

“What the hell?” Gary said getting back up.

“I don’t know what those first explosions were,” Derek said, “But those explosions are 120mm canon rounds. I think that the Cavalry has arrived.”

The 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, out of Ft. Hood Texas came in behind the Pep Boys and unleashed their M1A2 Abrams tanks. Derek’s Iowa National Guard unit was part of the 7th Cavalry and he knew the sound well. Between those 12 MOAB’s and the cannon fire, the disheartened soldiers of Ft. Leonard Wood rapidly threw down their arms and surrendered. In a way, the attacks were almost anticlimactic. The earlier sniper fire had so demoralized the soldiers that a revolt was breaking out when the attacks came. Camp LeJeune had fallen earlier in the day. The troops from North Carolina

swept into the post rounding up the men and gathering arms.

The coup was over. Or, was it? There was no sign of Wesley Clark at Mt. Weather...

Preparations – Chapter 39 – Back to Normal

“Well, I guess we can go home now,” Ron said, “We saved the country.”

“If we saved the country,” Clarence said, “What are all of these other folks doing?”

“I just want to get back to Palmdale and clean out my garage,” Gary said, “It’s a mess and my supplies are all disorganized.”

“What are we going to do with all of the stuff we ‘borrowed’?” Clarence asked. “If the coup is over, we can’t run around with these automatic weapons and stuff.”

“I don’t know what the two of you are going to do,” Gary said, “But I have a basement now and I think maybe I’ll just put the ‘stuff’ up for the next time.”

“Next time?” Ron and Clarence echoed in unison.

“Yes, the next time,” Gary said. “What makes you think this is over? The US has half the world angry at it for one reason or another. George will probably just turn around and send those troops back to Iraq and then where will we be?”

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Monday, May 2, 2005...Palmdale, California

When they’d arrived back in Palmdale, Gary had Derek collect all of the weapons and he stored them in his new basement. The 46 men and women who made up the Palmdale militia returned to their homes and apartments. Lorrie and David moved back to their home, as did Amy and DeWayne. It didn’t take much to move Clarence and Lucy back either, but moving Ron and all of his ‘stuff’ was going to be a challenge. They managed, somehow, and eventually life at the Olsen residence returned to normal.

Junior (Derek’s first father-in-law) had put up quite a fight over the custody of Derek, Junior, but Derek had a trump card, the Palmdale militia. DJ made the trip back to California with his Dad. Between May 2nd, when they’d arrived back and today, May 14th, everyone just wanted to get home and return to their lives, such as they were. Bush was back in the White House with a new Secret Service detail and had pushed to get the country back to normal. About all he’d accomplished in the month since he and Laura had been freed was get the news media back up. He was supposed to address the nation on Monday the 16th.

“Sure hate to see you boys leave,” Gary said.

“I’d like to say it’s been fun Dad,” Derek replied, “But let’s just say it was interesting and leave it at that.”

“What are you going to do when you get back to Iowa, Damon?” Gary asked.

“Look for a job,” Damon answered, “That’s what I’m good at, looking for a job.”

“You might try working for a change,” Gary said, “Maybe your job will last more than a week.”

Derek pulled out in the Humvee they’d retrieved from the mine. He figured if he returned it to the Iowa National Guard they might let it slide. He took more back with him than he’d brought. The converted AR-15’s had been replaced by the real thing and they had the M4-FA suppressors and M203 grenade launchers. He had taken 2 of the MP5’s and they had fitted suppressors to his main battle rifles. Iowa didn’t allow machine guns, sawed off shotguns or suppressors, so he was going to find someplace to keep them.

Damon left right after Derek and he took one of the MP5’s, too. He hugged his Dad, fired up the Harley and was gone.

“Well dear,” Gary said to Sharon, “Either we have to get a bigger house or I’ve got to quit inviting people to stay.”

“Did you finish the inventory of the food in the garage yet?” Sharon asked.

“Yep,” Gary said, “I figure we have enough pinto beans to last us to the year 2015.”

“They won’t last that long,” she said, “I’ve kind of gotten fond of them.”

“You realize, don’t you,” he said, “That once we replace the food, we’ll be ready for an earthquake or anything else. And Ron called this morning. He finally has his arm out of the sling.”

“How’s your head?” Sharon asked.

“The same,” Gary replied, “Empty.”

Actually, Gary and Sharon were in pretty good shape, financially. The bank had made the April and May deposits and then sent Gary an email telling him that he was going to have to go back to living on just the income from the trust. It pretty much looked like they were going to stay in Palmdale too, there didn’t appear to be a housing market and they probably couldn’t give their home away. Wasn’t it a shame that the bank that held the mortgage on their home was in the blast area in downtown LA? Well, they’d save the payments, just in case someone had duplicate records, but Gary didn’t really think that was likely.

Monday, May 16, 2005...6pm PDT

My Fellow Americans, Bush began.

These past 3 months have been a time that tried our faith in the American system of government. Laura and I thought, more than once, that we were seeing the end of the great experiment in Democracy. But, you, the American people, have restored our faith in the system. The United States is a country of laws, not men. Several times in its 230-year history, men have tried to wrestle control of the country from the people and all have failed.

I have posted a \$50 million dollar reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of former General Wesley K. Clark on charges of treason, murder, and kidnapping. I urge anyone who has any knowledge of his whereabouts to immediately contact his or her nearest law enforcement office.

I have issued an Executive Order granting a General Amnesty to all of the brave men and women who took up arms in the cause for freedom. You have 30 days to return any illegal weapons in your possession to the nearest law enforcement agency. The amnesty also applies to anyone in the possession of government property that they found necessary to take in order to survive. After the amnesty period, the laws will be enforced.

I have determined that the information that I relied on to wage war on Iraq was inaccurate and incomplete. We have removed the dictator Saddam Hussein and he faces trial by the Iraqi people. Consequently I am continuing the recall of American forces from Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo. When the states have appointed Representatives and Senators to replace those members of Congress who lost their lives in the tragic events of February 14th, I intend to introduce legislation designed to prevent the events of February 14th from ever happening again.

God Bless America.

CNN hadn't even switched to commentary before the phone rang.

"Hello?" Gary answered.

"Hey partner," Ron's voice came over the phone, "Did you catch the speech?"

"Yeah, it was Bush back to his normal self," Gary said, "It was I this and I that and he said God Bless America."

"Are you going to turn in the stuff (weapons)?" Ron asked.

"Oh hell no," Gary replied, "We gave them back all of their vehicles (they parked them at the Palmdale Library). The stuff is all tucked away downstairs."

"What are you going to do with the other stuff on your patio (40mm Mk-19 grenades and .50BMG ammo)?" Ron asked.

“As soon as we get the other stuff boxed up,” Gary responded, “I’m going to rent a storage locker. If you have any more questions, I’ll put on a pot of coffee and you can come over and visit.”

“I’ll be right over,” Ron said.

When Ron arrived, Gary handed him the cup of coffee and the bottle of Sweet and Low. They walked out to the patio and surveyed Gary’s progress at repacking the munitions. Gary had Sharon drive him to the reopened U-Haul and had picked up several bundles of boxes. Most of the ammo was repacked into U-Haul book boxes. Ron walked over and opened an unsealed box. It was full of romance novels.

“What’s the deal with the books, partner?” Ron asked.

“Well, a box of ammo weights the same as a box of books,” Gary explained, “I made sure of that. I went around the house and picked up the romance novels lying around to box them up as a cover. Got some from Patti, too. Anyway, every box has a layer or two of romance novels on the top.”

“I thought you got rid of the books,” Ron said.

“I did, too Ron,” Gary laughed, “But I missed a few. Patti had a dozen cases or more shoved in one corner of Chris’s garage, too. He was grateful to get the space back.”

“Speaking of Chris, did you buy his guns?” Ron asked.

“You bet and I paid him just what the market is at the moment, next to nothing,” Gary laughed. “By the way, assume for the time being that the phones and Internet are still tapped.”

“Why? Dubya is back in charge and things are going to get back to normal,” Ron said.

“Yeah, right,” Gary grimaced, “Did you catch the bit about he was going to introduce legislation to prevent the events of February 14th from ever happening again?”

“I did, so what?” Ron asked.

“Think about it,” Gary said, “What kind of laws would prevent February 14th from every happening again?”

“I have no idea,” Ron answered.

“Neither do I,” Gary admitted, “But I don’t like the implications.”

“Hmm,” Ron replied, “Can I store my suppressors and the other stuff we shouldn’t have in your basement?”

“Now you’re thinking Ron,” Gary said. “Of course, and I’d better get Clarence to do the same.”

They went back inside, refilled their cups and moved to the office. Sharon still didn’t allow smoking in her house.

“Did you get the garage cleaned up?” Ron asked.

“Yep,” Gary replied, “I’m going to start restocking the food.”

“What’s the deal?” Ron asked, “The crisis is over.”

“I wouldn’t be so sure about that if I were you, partner,” Gary shook his head. “The crisis might just be beginning.”

“What do you mean by that?” Ron asked. “Bush is back in power. They’ve already started to rebuild the cities and life is starting to get back to normal. Well, as normal as possible under the circumstances.”

“Our friend Wes Clark is running around loose somewhere and I think that this is just the calm before the storm,” Gary opined.

“He’s a crazy SOB,” Ron laughed, “He isn’t any threat. Besides, with a \$50 million reward, they’ll have him locked up in no time.”

“I wasn’t necessarily thinking about Clark, partner,” Gary said, “Although he is a concern. We have half the world po’d at us. I’m surprised that they didn’t attack or invade the US during the recent crisis.”

“Well, I’ll fill in my food and supplies,” Ron said, “But I think it is a waste of money.”

Gary finished boxing up ‘the stuff’ and rented a storage locker for ‘Sharon’s books’. Walton Feed wasn’t back in business full time, so they just shopped the community and restocked the food as best that they could. Oh, the gun store reopened, and Gary spent his last bit of money on a M1A Super Match, just like Ron’s.

When September rolled around and the bank made a large income distribution to the trust, Gary bought another used 2,200-gallon propane tank and had it filled. Clarence had put in a used 2,200-gallon tank, too, and one of those 3,000-gallon plastic water tanks. Ron had found a used 1,000-gallon propane tank and all three men had nearly identical capacities to survive whatever happened next. The states had appointed replacement Representatives and Senators to the Congress and Congress resumed on the Tuesday, a week after Labor Day. True to his word, Bush introduced a new law; it would change the USA Patriot Act into the most invasive law in the history of the country.

Preparations – Chapter 40 – USA Patriot Act II

The new, timid Congress all but rubber-stamped Bush's proposed changes to the USA Patriot Act, and the media were calling the new law the USA Patriot Act II. The news media had replaced their deceased anchors and reporters with another bunch of liberals. Where did they find these people, under a rock? The new law looked like it circumvented a lot more of the Constitutional protections, too. The Supreme Court members had all been killed off on February 14th and Bush got to do what no other President had been able to do since George Washington, pack the Court. Again, the Senate rubber-stamped his choices. All except for Senator Kerry who had been appointed to fill Kennedy's seat.

Gary had been right, under the revised law; you couldn't fart without a dozen federal agencies getting a whiff. Gary had been out on the net researching the history of the USA Patriot Act and it made for interesting reading.

The Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center created a climate that made passage of the USA Patriot Act possible, a specialist on immigration rights for the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey said recently at a panel discussion. The actual title of the law was Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) ACT OF 2001. The actual original title of USA Patriot Act II was Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003.

"It's been a law enforcement wish list but was never introduced because the public climate was not right," said Parastou Hassouri, one of the panelists at a recent forum on balancing civil liberties and the USA Patriot Act, held at the Navesink Library in Middletown.

The panel discussion was hosted by the Monmouth County Friends of the American Civil Liberties Union.

The event, which drew a crowd of about 150, was co-sponsored by the Greater Red Bank Area League of Women Voters, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County, and the Quakers Shrewsbury Friends Meeting.

Panelists, in addition to Hassouri, immigrant rights project specialist for the ACLU, were Robert A. Honecker Jr., first assistant prosecutor of Monmouth County; and Grayson Barber, immediate past chair of the Individual Rights Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association. Deborah Jacobs, executive director of the ACLU, moderated the panel.

Hassouri told a standing-room-only crowd that the WTC attacks created a climate that allowed passage of the USA Patriot Act in October 2001 but the roots of the legislation go back further.

According to Hassouri, it's unlikely that the lengthy, 342-page legislation which amends at least 15 other statutes was drafted so soon after 9/11.

Instead, she said the general consensus is that the impetus for the USA Patriot Act, and possibly the drafting of large parts of the legislation, likely followed the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City in 1994.

The USA Patriot Act, she said, has two major thrusts: it authorizes government action to be taken in secret and it undermines checks and balances on executive power.

Addressing the issue from the law enforcement perspective, Honecker told the panel the USA Patriot Act has contributed to the fight against terrorism by allowing government agencies to share information. The act allows law enforcement agencies to engage in activities against terrorism and other individuals involved in criminal activities in the United States, he noted.

For example, he said the USA Patriot Act has a judicially authorized "sneak and peek" provision that allows law enforcement agencies to perform a search but delay notification for a period of up to three months.

"This opportunity is something necessary when dealing with terrorists," he said.

Honecker acknowledged that the provision "is a departure from what is traditional," and has been criticized because the US Constitution bars unreasonable search and seizure.

"In my opinion," he told those in attendance, "if used in a limited number of circumstances, it may save lives. Then it contributes to the safety of our citizens.

"It is important for us to take what we can from the USA Patriot Act and use it on a local level."

Barber, chair of the ACLU-NJ Privacy Committee, countered Honecker.

"The USA Patriot Act," she said, "amounts to government in secret because it provides for the issuance of search warrants in secret without probable cause.

"The framers of the Constitution created a balance of powers by adopting the Fourth Amendment which protects against unreasonable searches and seizures," she added.

"The government must have probable cause a crime is to be committed," she said. "The USA Patriot Act changes that. The government doesn't need that any more. The USA Patriot Act permits secret orders without probable cause to investigate people who are not suspects."

"That means the government has the right to investigate people's activities at libraries, mosques, synagogues and political rallies," she added.

Hassouri said sections of the USA Patriot Act permit a person suspected of being involved with a terrorist organization to be held for up to seven days.

“The charge doesn’t have to be terrorism related,” she noted. “Before the USA Patriot Act, a person could be held for [no more than] 24 hours.”

Honecker said legislators who voted to pass the USA Patriot Act regarded the measure as “an emergency response” and the act incorporates a sunset provision.

“In 2005 many of the controversial issues identified by the ACLU will end,” he noted.

Hastily enacted, debate should take place on the issue of whether sections of the act should sunset, Honecker said. However, he said “in certain circumstances [the USA Patriot Act] has allowed law enforcement to save lives.”

“Whether the USA Patriot Act extends too far is what this discussion is about,” he told members of the audience, some of whom later peppered him with queries during a question and answer period that followed the panel.

Later, in response to a query from an audience member, Honecker said he was in favor of amending the act to make it consistent with the Fourth Amendment by including probable cause.

“When it comes to the safety of citizens, it has to be thought out what is fair and good for the citizens of this country.

“It has caused citizens to find themselves in secret files,” retorted Jacobs. “The trouble is the USA Patriot Act takes our system out of balance. We had checks and balances and now we don’t.”

Hassouri said since 9/11 there “have been countless attacks on immigrant rights” and the media has failed to report on these incidents.

“There’s a real climate of insecurity and fear raging in a lot of the immigrant communities,” she said. “It is a dangerous path we’re going down. The notion of what it means to be an American, to be a citizen.”

“Certainly in this community we will take every opportunity to guarantee individual rights for all citizens,” said Honecker. “We will ... do everything we can to protect you. If that means we must go out and arrest people who want to do you harm, we will. But we will do it within the context that respects your individual rights.”

During the question and answer session, Honecker said the USA Patriot Act “has given us the opportunity to be more aggressive in our surveillance.

"I think law enforcement efforts since 9/11 have done a significant amount to disrupt terror activities and have deterred criminal activities," he said.

According to Honecker, members of local police departments are now trained in counter terrorism, "We never did that before 9/11," he said, "and individuals are reporting suspicious behavior. It's a more comprehensive network post-9/11, and that mechanism in and of itself has deterred terror activities."

Honecker said the USA Patriot Act has had a significant impact on the way laws are enforced by the county prosecutor. Since 9/11 he spends 50 percent of his day involved in dealing with terror-related activities, he explained.

"It's more a process of information sharing," he said, involving local citizens, local law enforcement officials, the prosecutor's office and the FBI.

"We're trying to share information so a piece is not missed."

[Authors Note: I do not like the USA Patriot Act because it goes against the letter and spirit of the US Constitution. USA Patriot Act II was drafted but never introduced, nor acted upon, apparently, until now.]

"Derek's on the phone," Sharon said.

"Hi Derek, how are you doing?" Gary asked.

"So-so Dad," Derek answered.

"What's up? Junior trying to get DJ back?" Gary asked.

"We just got back from Bolivar, Dad," Derek said, "Junior died and Brenda says that DJ might as well stay with us."

"Sorry to hear about Junior," Gary said, "But that's good news about DJ. How did things work out with the Guard?"

"General Amnesty covered everything Dad," Derek said, "Besides, most of my unit bugged out before it was over, so they didn't know where to start punishing people."

"What about the job? Are you back to work?" Gary continued grilling Derek.

"Same miserable job as before. Oh, Damon called, he got a job installing insulation up in Mason City," Derek reported.

"That won't last," Gary suggested.

"I don't know about that, he's been on it 3 weeks so far," Derek laughed, "That's the

longest he's held a job since he was driving truck."

"Did you find some place to put, you know," Gary asked.

"Added an extension to the lower level," Derek explained. "I'd love to visit, but it isn't a good idea, if you get my drift."

"Perfectly," Gary said and hung up. Gary got out his King James Bible and dusted it off; it was going to be like that again.

Gary dialed Ron.

"Hello?" Linda answered.

"It's me is he there?" Gary asked.

"Well, yes, what's up," she asked.

"Not over the phone," Gary said, "Ask him to drop by muy pronto."

Gary had barely hung up the phone and gotten a cup of coffee before Ron arrived.

"What's so urgent that you couldn't talk over the phone Gar-Bear?" Ron asked.

"Have you seen the summary of the new USA Patriot Act II provisions on CNN?" Gary asked.

"No, why?" Ron wanted to know.

"Bush rolled the Assault Weapons Ban into the new Act and eliminated all of the sunset provisions," Gary explained. "Plus, he added some new provisions that take away more rights."

"Congress will never go along with that," Ron said.

"Bull hockey Ronald," Gary said, "The only dissenting vote was Senator Kerry. It's been passed and signed into law. And, get this; the new magazine capacity limit is 7 rounds. Plus, they added the M1A and all other kinds of other rifles to the prohibited list."

"Kerry voted AGAINST the new law?" Ron repeated, "God help us."

"It may just take more than God to help us out of this one pard," Gary said, "I've really got a bad feeling about this. By the way, it's not officially called the USA Patriot Act II. It's called Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2005, although the MSM is calling it USA Patriot Act II."

“I see that house on the corner is still empty,” Ron observed.

“That and the one on either side of us Ron,” Gary said. “Those folks from San Francisco are dead and the other two homes are back on the market.”

“Lyn and I were talking when you called,” Ron said. “We like that house down on the corner better than the one we have. And there’s no pool to maintain. We’re thinking about buying it subject to our home selling.”

“You going to move again?” Gary asked.

“Yep,” Ron affirmed. “And then when I what to talk to you I can just stick my head out the door and yell, ‘Hey butthead’.”

Preparations – Chapter 41 – Old Home Week

“Hi Gary, this is Clarence,” Clarence announced on the phone.

“Hi Clarence, get all settled in?” Gary asked.

“That’s sort of why I called, Gary,” Clarence explained, “Is that house that Lucy and I lived in still empty?”

“Yeah, the people who bought it got killed in San Francisco. Why?” Gary inquired.

“Well, my sister and I were talking and she wants a home of her own,” Clarence replied, “Lucy and I talked it over and we kind of liked that house. Anyway, I can sell my house to my sister on a land sale contract and put a bid on that house.”

“That’s almost funny Clarence, Ron was over last night and Linda and he are going to buy the house on the corner,” Gary related.

“Really?” Clarence said. “He probably just wants to be able to stick his head out the door and call you butthead,”

“Those were his very words, pal,” Gary admitted. “Well, I hope you get the house, it will be nice for all of us to be living here together.”

“Who was that, honey?” Sharon asked.

“Clarence, dear,” Gary said, “Lucy and he are thinking about buying Dan and Dawn’s house. That’s sort of strange, too. Last night Ron said that Linda and he were buying the Klein’s house.”

“You might just as well move a bed down to Ron and Linda’s for all I’ll see of you,” Sharon commented.

“Actually, I was thinking that we out to buy the house between ours and Chris and Patti’s,” Gary said, “This house is paid for thanks to the nuke and if we bought that house, we’d have somewhere for the kids to live every time they moved home.”

“Can we afford it?” Sharon asked.

“With the housing market the way it is?” Gary laughed, “We can get it for a song. In fact, we ought to just have Amy and DeWayne move in now. They can pay us rent instead of someone else.”

“Or not pay us like they’re not paying their landlord,” Sharon said.

“Whatever,” Gary smiled. “I figure we can run a computer network to Clarence’s, Amy’s,

Patti's and Ron's. If we do that, I can upgrade my DSL access to the higher access rate at \$150 a month. Since everyone is paying \$30 a month, Amy will get free access and we'll all have faster access."

Before Sharon had insisted that Gary buy her a computer back in 2004, that suggestion would have surely started a fight. However, it made sense now, it wouldn't cost them any extra for faster access, so she was all for it. Gary ordered a package deal from 3Com that included an 8-port unmanaged 10/100/1000 Office Connect switch and 6 1-gig NIC's. He was going to have secure communications up and down the line at high-speed to boot.

01Nov05...

Gary didn't know if it had been Ron and Clarence moving to the tract, his buying the house next door and moving Amy in or just what. But, even Chris was getting on the bandwagon. Sharon and he had gotten the house cheap, the bank must have been desperate, and so far, Amy was making the rent payments. It probably helped that they only charged her the P & I plus a prorated share of the taxes each month, but so far, so good. Gary had picked up a RS 45000 Onan natural gas/propane generator for the house with a 400 amp ATS and a second plastic water tank. Chris had put in a water tank, a diesel generator and an underground fuel tank. It must have been Patti's doing, Chris only had money to spend on that race car.

Patti had made Chris erect a metal shed in their back yard and she and Sharon had been hitting Costco and Sam's Club pretty hard stocking up on food. Rooting around in the basement, while cleaning guns and restacking the ammo, Gary had found an overlooked Surefire suppressor and had installed it on his Super Match. He had done the 'shift' routine and moved rifle sights, too. The Loaded M1A was without a scope, but that suited him just fine. A man had to have one rifle he could grub around in the dirt with without worrying about knocking the sights out of alignment. White's Surplus had a sale on ALICE web gear and he'd stocked up on that too. The ALICE gear had proven to be the best choice; he'd heard that there were a lot of complaints that the MOLLE stuff had caused problems in Iraq.

After Ron moved in, they reestablished the OP in the northeast bedroom. This new gigabit network was really nice, too. They could communicate using the Net Meeting software and since it was an intranet meeting, it was totally secure. They all just activated the software and kept it running minimized in their taskbars. They had time now to undo earlier mistakes and fill in gaps in their preparations. And, since they weren't in the middle of any emergency, they could do it far more cheaply; although, there weren't many loose ends by this time. Gary finally retired the straw hat, too. Got him a new one, just like the first hat. He told everyone when this hat bit the dust they could just bury him. Ron wanted to know if they really had to wait.

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General Clark was born on 23 December 1944 and grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is married to the former Gertrude Kingston of Brooklyn, New York. He and his wife have one son, Wesley, who lived in California. Wesley was back in Littlerock, one word not two. Littlerock, one word not two, is five miles southeast of Palmdale, California on highway 138. It was the ideal place for good old Wes to hide. It was a tiny town barely 4 blocks long and once you got away from the main drag, the houses were spaced about ¼ to ½ mile apart. Wes, Gertrude, Wesley, Jr. and 2 aides were living in the home north of Littlerock. The Clarks hadn't left the home since they had arrived in April; and, the aides handled any shopping that was needed.

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There had been Clark sightings all over the country and at several locations in Europe. It seemed that everyone and their brother wanted the \$50 million. The US Marshal Service (formed September 24, 1789) patiently checked out every single lead, but to no avail. One wouldn't think that someone as prominent as Wesley K. Clark would have been so hard to find, but they were running out of leads. They even had a lead come in from Palmdale, CA, but when they went to check, the tipster turned out to be a drunk and there was no sign of the aircraft that was missing from Mt. Weather. It was just another dead end.

When Sharon heard one news report that Clark might have gone to France, she said that the US ought to nuke France just on general principle, in case Clark was there. And, if he weren't, it would be no great loss. Gary told Sharon that a lot of the Squirrels felt that way, but she didn't have any idea what he was talking about.

Friday, 11Nov05...

The Department of Homeland Security had made so many announcements about possible terrorist attacks that the American public had begun to ignore the announcements. It seemed that every holiday was an excuse for another announcement. Besides, with the American troops out of Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and Korea, most of the hot spots had been defused.

The Iraqis had held their January 2005 elections and elected a new government. The fact that a civil war broke out shortly thereafter had nothing to do with the US and Bush had pulled the troops out, so what was there to worry about? The Saudis had finally arrested everyone who refused the amnesty program back in 2004 and Iran had submitted to nuclear inspections. North Korea was still balking, but was new about that? They had been balking since 1952 over one thing or another.

Gary, Ron and Clarence were playing Hearts on the network. So far, Clarence was way ahead of the other two men; he must be cheating, somehow. Gary thought he heard something, but, being deaf in the right ear, dismissed it as noise from the fan sitting in the door of his office to blow the smoke out the window. The Net Meeting icon began to blink in the tray, indicating someone wanted to communicate with someone else. Gary

clicked the program up to see what was up. "Turn on CNN!!!" the message said.

Gary went to the living room and turned on the TV.

...16 shot down a United Airlines 747 at 8:46 pm Eastern Standard Time. The plane was apparently hijacked shortly after takeoff from Los Angeles International Airport. The White House is expected to make an announcement at 9pm eastern in about 7 minutes.

Reports from the site of the crash indicate that there were no survivors. Sources tell CNN that the flight was a charter flight returning veterans representing servicemen from all wars from the dedication ceremony held earlier today at the new Los Angeles Coliseum named after Vietnam sniper Carlos Hathcock.

Hathcock, you may remember was a decorated Marine sniper who killed approximately 300 enemy soldiers in Vietnam. Hathcock died February 23, 1999, a victim of multiple sclerosis. The North Vietnamese put a \$30,000 bounty on his head and called him 'Long Trang' or White Feather. Springfield Armory acknowledged Hathcock with a special edition, the M25 White Feather Tactical/Carlos Hathcock model M1A.

The veterans included veterans from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and both Gulf Wars. CNN estimates that the death toll was nearly 300, including the flight crew. The FAA has been unusually quiet concerning who the hijackers were. Speculation is running from another group of al Qaeda terrorists to a militia group from Palmdale, California known as the Palmdale Militia. This so-called militia was instrumental in the taking of Ft. Leonard Wood earlier this year during that crisis. Sources tell CNN that the group included 48 former members of the California National Guard and was led by three seniors from the Palmdale area. We take you now to the White...

The door burst open with a crack of breaking wood.

"US Marshals, freeze!" came the command.

There were three big men standing just inside the doorway, pointing guns at Gary. Gary froze. One of the men walked around the couch and yanked Gary to a standing position and then roughly turned him around and placed handcuffs on his wrists. Gary didn't say a word, to his credit.

"Are you Gary Olsen?" one of the Marshals asked.

"Olsen, Gary D., civilian, 4X4-XX-2XX0, 23Mar1943," Gary replied.

Mr. Olsen you are under arrest," the Marshal said.

"What's the charge?" Gary asked.

"Suspicion of hijacking an airliner," the Marshal replied.

“CNN just said there were no survivors,” Gary said, “How did I hijack an airline and end up in Palmdale alive?”

“You have the right to remain silent,” the Marshal said, “You have the right to speak to an attorney and have one present during questioning. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you. Do you understand these rights Mr. Olsen?”

“Yes,” Gary said.

“Having these rights in mind,” the agent continued, “Do you wish to speak with us now?”

“All right copper, ya got me,” Gary said, “I ain’t saying nuttin til I get a mouthpiece.”

“You don’t seem to be taking this very serious Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal observed.

“I ain’t saying nuttin til I get a mouthpiece,” Gary repeated.

“Do you have any particular attorney in mind Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal said, mostly to humor Gary.

“I want Johnny Cochran,” Gary said.

“Why him?” the Marshal couldn’t resist.

“He got OJ off,” Gary said, “And if he could get OJ off, he can get anyone off.”

Gary noticed Clarence was handcuffed and being hustled into a black Suburban. He looked the other way and Ron was just disappearing into another Suburban. They drove for over an hour to the federal building on Wilshire Boulevard in West Los Angeles. Each man was taken to a separate room and the handcuffs removed; only to be replaced by a handcuff attached to the table. Then the waiting began. There was a mirror on the wall and Gary presumed that was the infamous piece of one-way glass. About 30 minutes later, a marshal entered the room.

“Mr. Olsen, would you like something to drink?” the Marshal asked.

“I’ll take a Coke,” Gary replied.

“Your file says you’re a diabetic, Mr. Olsen, you want a diet Coke, right?” the Marshal said.

“Hell no, I’m tough, bring me the real thing,” Gary said, “You have a file on me?”

Preparations – Chapter 42 – The 2” File

“We have your FBI file Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal said.

“FBI file? What FBI file,” Gary asked.

“You’re quite the character Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal said, “Your file is over two inches thick.”

“Must have written down every time I went to the toilet,” Gary thought.

The Marshal left the room. About 30 minutes later, he entered the room.

“You’re free to go Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal said.

“I want my attorney,” Gary said.

“I said that you were free to go,” the Marshal repeated.

“Yeah, well, I still want my attorney,” Gary said.

“What for Mr. Olsen,” the Marshal said, “You and your friends have been cleared.”

“For false arrest for beginners,” Gary said, “And for cruel and unusual punishment for another.”

“Cruel and unusual punishment?” the Marshal said, “That’s ridiculous.”

“You brought me a Coke, right?” Gary said.

“Yes Mr. Olsen, I brought you a Coke, so what?” the Marshal said.

“Well, you didn’t come back and ask me if I had to go to the bathroom,” Gary said, “And I peed my pants. That’s Cruel and Unusual Punishment in my book.”

“So sue me,” the Marshal said.

“I intend to,” Gary said, “Can I look at my file now?”

“Oh what the hell, why not,” the Marshal said.

The file was indeed 2” thick. It had copies of every security clearance request that had ever been processed on Gary. And, it had copies of every application for a Concealed Weapons permit that he’d ever applied for. It also had a copy of a report submitted by the resident agent in Davenport, Iowa back when he’d helped the ATF out on some case he’d completely forgotten about. That was it. No criminal record, no suspicion on

wrong doing, no nothing.”

“Marshal, why did you arrest us?” Gary asked.

“We got a tip, Mr. Olsen, from a woman, that you folks were involved,” the Marshal said.

“A woman, huh?” Gary said, “Would that be Kathy or Marie?”

The marshal didn’t answer, but Gary could see he’d guessed right from the look on the Marshal’s face. That narrowed it down. It must have been Kathy; all of Marie’s brains were below her chin. Boy would Ronald crap. He’d probably track the broad down and well, maybe he’d better not say anything to Ron, there was no telling what Ron might do to her. And, how did Kathy know about the Palmdale militia anyway?

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Arrested as they had been, the men had no idea what Bush had talked about. They asked and a marshal gave them a copy of The Daily News. For those who don’t know, Pravda West, as some call the LA Times, had its offices in downtown Los Angeles, near the location where the bomb had gone off on February 14th, 2005. The Chicago Tribune Company owned the Los Angeles Times and neither paper had rebuilt after the Valentine’s Day Massacre. The Daily News was a real rag and had none of the text of Bush’s speech.

After the marshals dropped them off at their homes, Ron said, “What the hell was that all about?”

“They had a tip, Ron, from a woman, that we were involved,” Gary said.

“I’m going to kill her!” Ron exclaimed.

“Kill who Ron?” Gary asked.

“Kathy. Marie can barely dial a phone,” Ron said. Oh well.

“They have a 2” file on me,” Gary said.

“Mine’s only half that thick,” Ron chuckled.

“Don’t have no file on me,” Clarence added.

“That’s because you’re dull, Clarence,” Ron said.

“Ain’t neither,” Clarence said, “I’m sharp, and I never got caught once.”

“Do tell,” Ron said.

"I didn't tell, that's why I got no file," Clarence laughed and returned to his home.

"I wonder what Bush said," Gary commented.

"Probably that the Palmdale Militia was behind the whole thing," Ron complained.

"We spent longer going to and from than we did in their office," Ron observed, "Maybe they'll have a rerun of the speech on CNN."

"I doubt it," Gary said, "Go to their website, they'll have the complete speech."

My Fellow Americans,

This evening the United States Air Force, acting under my direct orders, was forced to shoot down a 747 jet airliner. That airliner subsequently crashed into a field in West Virginia. The aircraft in question had been hijacked and the hijackers threatened to crash the plane into the White House. I had no choice in this matter.

The FBI is currently investigating this incident and the White House will keep you informed of any developments. Regrettably, 288 Veterans and 13 crewmembers lost their lives in the crash. Initial reports that a group called the Palmdale Militia being involved were incorrect. However, three members of the militia were being brought in for questioning. I repeat these individuals have been cleared of any wrong doing with regard to this crash.

God Bless America.

The phone rang and it was Ron.

"Did they ask you anything?" Ron inquired.

"Nope," Gary said.

"Then, why were we brought in for questioning?" Ron asked.

"You got me, they didn't even search the house according to Sharon," Gary explained.

"I called Clarence," Ron said, "They didn't ask him anything either."

"But the President's speech," Gary protested, "He said we weren't guilty of anything and they were bringing us anyway for questioning. What the frick is going on here?"

"Maybe that Marshal lied to you," Ron suggested, "And there wasn't really a tip."

"But he sort of reacted when I said Kathy or Marie," Gary insisted.

“It could have all been an act,” Ron said, “Come on over. I’m going to call Clarence back; we need to talk.”

A little after 10pm...the OP...

“Something stinks to high Heaven,” Ron suggested. “Bush went on national TV and mentioned us by name. He said we weren’t involved but they were bringing us in any way for questioning. And then, they didn’t ask us squat.”

“Ronald, that Marshal said I was under arrest,” Gary added.

“Me, too,” Clarence said.

“Yeah, same here,” Ron agreed.

“I don’t know about the two of you,” Gary said, “But I think I’m going to contact the ACLU.”

“Hold on there, partner, won’t that just make the government react?” Ron suggested. “They didn’t search any of our homes. But, if we sue them for false arrest, who knows what they’ll do to cover their butts? Besides, do you want to get hooked up with that bunch of liberals?”

“Listen pal, the ACLU has been getting a bad rap for years,” Gary said. “You remember Michael Douglas’s speech near the end of that movie, The American President?”

“Sort of, yeah. What does that have to do with anything?” Ron asked.

“That was one thing Hollywood got about right,” Gary explained. “The ACLU exists to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. I remember back a few years ago. Some bunch of Nazi’s wanted to march in Skokie, Illinois. Skokie is mostly Jewish and included some of the Holocaust survivors. Anyway, the ACLU, which includes a lot of Jews, sued the City of Skokie because they wouldn’t let the Nazi’s march. Said that the city violated freedom of speech and freedom of assembly laws or something like that. They won, too. I wouldn’t give you a dime for the whole bunch; but, our rights were violated and they’re the boys to take on the government.”

“Count me out Gar-Bear,” Ron said. “I’m going to keep a low profile.”

“I’m with Ron on this one Gary,” Clarence said, “Count me out, too.”

“All right, I’ll let it pass, if that’s the way you feel,” Gary said, “But those folks should have had have a psychological profile in my FBI file. They done screwed the pooch.”

“What’s he mean by that, Ron?” Clarence asked, ignoring Gary.

“Clarence, you are looking at the epitome of the Passive-Aggressive personality,” Ron chuckled. “Gary doesn’t get mad, but he’ll go to the ends of the earth to get even. Gar-Bear, whatever happened to that coffee cup you used to have?”

“You mean my ‘I don’t get mad, I just get even cup’?” Gary asked, “Cup got broke. But, I got even.”

“Just what we need,” Ron said, “A guy with a room full of machine guns, grenade launchers and stolen military property taking on the US government. Maybe I can buy my house back.”

“Are you going to move AGAIN?” Gary asked. “Forget it. Remember what Khan said.”

“Huh?” Clarence replied. “Do you guys explain everything in the terms of movies? I’ll bite, what did Khan say?”

“Gary’s referring to a Klingon proverb that tells us revenge is a dish that is best served cold,” Ron explained.

“Yeah, so?” Clarence asked.

“Gar-Bear won’t be doing anything rash, Clarence,” Ron smiled. “He’s going to take his time. But, he’ll get even; you can count on that.”

“I’m going home and go to bed,” Gary said, “I do my best thinking in my sleep. Good night guys.”

12Nov05...

Gary got Chris and Dick to help him repair the front door where the Marshals had crashed through the night before. It had been a nice door, but it was a total loss. They ended up going to Lowe’s and buying a new door and frame. Gary picked out a steel commercial door. Gary selected the ReliaBilt 36” 6-Panel No Brick Mould Steel Door Unit because it didn’t have a window and was relatively inexpensive.

He asked Chris to fashion him some straps to hold a plank he could drop in place across the door. If they came back, they weren’t coming through that door again. That evening, Gary went out on the net looking for window shutters. He found just what he was looking for at a website [gardiandoors dot com](http://gardiandoors.com) that sold roll down shutters. Since the website was up, he presumed they were still in business. He wrote down the phone number to call them on Monday. He’d had a couple of thoughts the previous night in his sleep. The feds were going to pay for making him pee his pants, and you could take that to the bank.

Preparations – Chapter 43 – The Shutters

14Nov05...

“They’re how much?” Gary asked again.

The man repeated the price for the roll down shutters.

“Uh, thank you,” Gary said, “But I think I’ll have to pass. And you say that they’re aluminum, not steel, right?”

“Yes sir,” the salesman said, “But they are very strong.”

“Thanks again,” Gary said and hung up.

Gary walked down to Ron’s.

“I called and checked on those roll down window shutters,” Gary advised Ron, “I think that they must be made out of gold, not aluminum.”

“What do you want those for?” Ron asked. “The houses are stucco. Even if you put in steel shutters, the walls wouldn’t stop a bullet.”

“In my next lifetime, I’m going to build a brick house with ¾” steel plate shutters,” Gary said.

“If you’re in a hurry,” Ron laughed, “I’d be willing to help you out.”

“God you’re ugly,” Gary changed the subject.

“That’s the pot calling the kettle black,” Ron smirked. “So did anything come to you in your dreams?”

“Yep. Can we drive down to that range on Angeles Crest?” Gary asked. “I need to get familiar with those .50 caliber rifles.”

“What, you’re going to take on the federal government singled handed with a .50 caliber rifle?” Ron asked.

“Well, not exactly Ronald McDonald,” Gary said, “Not directly anyway, but I have an idea how to keep those government folks chasing their tails.”

Under the new Assault Weapons Ban, the .50 caliber rifles were illegal for anyone to own except for LEO’s and the military. So, the M107 with its Reflex suppressor, 10-round magazine, etc. was just about as illegal as a rifle could be. Damon. Bless his heart, had come up with several of the 80-round boxes of the .50BMG ammo that IMI

loaded for Barrett. Gary took two boxes with him to the range. 160-rounds later, his shoulder was pretty sore, padded shooting jacket notwithstanding. But, old Gar-Bear could handle the Tac-50. He fired a few shots with the M82A1M to verify it was still good to go. Derek had the second TAC-50.

Just because Gary didn't have a California Driver's License didn't mean he couldn't drive a car, either. He had been a fair to middling driver, back when. He just needed some non-descript beater that no one would give a second look at. He had Ron drop him off at the AV Mall on the way home. He had some shopping to do. Ron told him to call when he was ready to be picked up and he'd come back for him. Gary took a screwdriver out of the glove box and said he'd call when he was ready. As luck would have it, there were two Toyota's parked next to each other in the parking lot, one with the keys in the ignition. Gary used the screwdriver to change the plates, hopped in and drove off with the car. It was Grand Theft Auto! Or was it? The car he took wasn't worth \$500, so maybe it was Minor Theft Auto.

Chris told Gary it wouldn't take much to get the beater running, but where had it come from? Gary told him he'd found it abandoned with the keys in the ignition. Chris figured that was a likely story, but he went to Chief Auto parts and got the parts to get the junk heap running. He had it parked in front of Gary and Sharon's before 10pm. He gave Gary the keys, Gary paid him for the work and Chris went home. Gary got his TAC-50 and hopped in the car. His plan wasn't elaborate, just something to irritate folks and keep the LEO's and troops running in circles.

It took 3 shots to hit the insulator. Buzz, zap. The line fell sending up a shower of sparks. He did better on the next insulator; it went down with the first shot. Buzz, zap. He looked over his shoulder. The lights were out in Palmdale. Gary drove north to Lake Los Angeles and back to Palmdale from there. It would take Edison the better part of a day to get the power back on and people would sure be po'd. Of course, the LEO's wouldn't suspect a 62-year old cripple had done the deed, so Gary sort of figured he was home free. Hell, they'd be running in circles looking for whoever did it. He parked the car in Grecian Isles and walked home carrying the rifle case. This was the most dangerous part of the whole adventure.

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Gary put the rifle away and sat down at his computer. Net Meeting was flashing and he clicked it up. Call me, it said and the sender was Ron.

"What's up Ron?" Gary asked.

"Where have you been?" Ron asked.

"If you're up, how about I come over?" Gary suggested.

"Ciao," Ron replied.

3 minutes later in the OP...

"If they catch you," Ron said, "They're going to lock you up and throw away the key."

"Whatever are you talking about, partner," Gary asked.

"Oh just some guy I know on a one-man campaign to stir up hate and discontent by driving around in a stolen Toyota shooting up high line insulators," Ron said. "Next time, let us know. Clarence and I will be glad to join you."

"You said count me out," Gary protested.

"I was talking about suing the government Gar-Bear, but channel 3 says the power will be off all night," Ron retorted. "They seem to be blaming the government for having lax security. So, count me in."

15Nov05...

"This is a warrant to search these premises," the marshal said.

"Go for it," Gary replied. "Oh, there are two handguns in my sock drawer, a .22 and a .32."

The Marshals spent most of the day searching Gary, Ron and Clarence homes.

"You're in the clear Mr. Olsen," the Marshal said, "But we'll be keeping an eye on you."

"Why?" Gary asked, "Did someone hijack another airliner?"

Come to think of it, there hadn't been a word on TV about that shoot down, was the government hiding something? As far as Gary was concerned, there wasn't any urgency to the project he had under taken. And, if he went down 14 a ways and took out some of those insulators, it would knock out power to the San Fernando Valley. And, while he was at it, it wasn't all that far to Ventura... Hmm, if he could come up with some dynamite, there were a couple of pipelines that were easy to get at, too. Why not, it had worked for good old Wes! Where was that SOB anyway?

Gary went out on the net because he was pretty sure the feds would be back. He was looking for some way to block the ground penetration radar they were sure to bring. It was so simple, that it was absurd. And, he had the one piece of equipment you needed to screw up the ground penetrating radar. Hell, half the people in America had the device maybe more. It had better work, too. Otherwise he would just be a number somewhere.

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16Nov05...

"Ronald," Gary said on the phone, "Can you come down for a minute?"

"Be right there partner, Ciao," Ron said.

"Look, Ron, I need your help," Gary explained. "I want to put in a bomb shelter."

"What for Gar-Bear?" Ron asked, "You expecting the Russians to attack?"

"No, it's a decoy," Gary said.

"Huh?" Ron came back.

"Look, I found out on the net last night that there's a way to interfere with ground penetrating radar," Gary explained. "But, I want the feds to think they have found something and maybe I won't have to test whether or not that works."

"What did you have in mind?" Ron asked.

"Do you remember in The Ark how I built that hidden tunnel entrance?" Gary asked.

"No," Ron said, "But continue."

"Ok. We'll dig down about 10' and put in an 8' square concrete block room and roof it with some of that surplus plate steel, and pour some concrete over it," Gary explained. "We can build a hidden entrance to the room, like in my story. I'll stock the room with some food and water and cots. When the feds show up with their ground penetrating radar, they'll find the room but no entrance. I'll make a fuss and then show them how to get in. Maybe they won't even bother with the house."

"And if they do?" Ron asked.

"Well, that's plan B," Gary said. "You see, you take a ..."

"Who would have thought it would be that simple," Ron said.

"It might not work, so we'd better think about someplace else to store the guns," Gary said, "But in the meantime, let's put in a bomb shelter."

Gary and Ron knew just the guy to do the work for Gary. They got him on the phone and he was glad to help out a couple of old friends, for a price. It took Tom about a week to dig the hole, pour the slab, lay the block and put on the roof. Gary paid Tom and told him that he would take it from there. The three old geezers built a frame and filled it with potted houseplants. Then added a little potting soil to hide the pots. The en-

trance was small, about 2' square and two men could easily lift the frame. One man could do it in a pinch. Gary put 2 folding cots, a case of civilian MRE's and 2 5-gallon bottles of Arrowhead water in the bomb shelter. It was now time to go hunting again.

Buzz, zap. Buzz, zap. The two insulators were gone and the lines were down. They drove to Santa Clarita and over to highway 126. An hour later it was buzz, zap, buzz, zap and two more power lines went down. The three old coots continued to Santa Barbara and Solvang to make their alibi tight. Gary bought Sharon a doll at the doll shop and they headed home. They dumped the car at the trailer park and hid the rifles in one of the shot up trailers. When they got home, the feds were there, searching. And, this time they had ground-penetrating radar to boot.

"Help you guys?" Gary asked.

"Search warrant, Mr. Olsen," the Marshal said, "Please stay out of the way. Gary went to his office, got the cell phone, turned it on, called Ron and told him to leave the line open, and put it in the linen cabinet. He then walked out and sat down on the patio to watch. It took them a while to find the bomb shelter, but they found it. When it looked like they were about ready to dynamite the thing, Gary showed them the entrance.

"What's the shelter for Mr. Olsen?" the marshal asked.

"Storms, Gary said, "They don't build many basements here in California, especially in LA County."

Dissatisfied, the Marshals continued their search, including the house. An hour later, they gave up.

"Satisfied?" Gary asked.

"Where were you when we got here Mr. Olsen?" the marshal asked.

"Oh, Ron, Clarence and I made a trip to Solvang so I could buy my wife a doll as a Christmas present," Gary said, "Something wrong with that?"

"Let me see the doll," the Marshal said.

Gary showed the doll to the Marshal and he just shook his head and left. Gary followed him out the door.

"Hey, how about you put up a sign that says you searched my place?"

Preparations – Chapter 44 – Decisions, Decisions

“I thought you were a goner for sure,” Ron said.

“Actually, I think I just got lucky,” Gary said. “They didn’t appear to have the latest equipment. We’re going to have to move the guns. There is a stage over at the trailer park. I looked, and it’s just a façade, so if we could build a door into the area under the stage, that might be a good place to hide the guns and ammo.”

“What do you mean by façade?” Clarence asked.

“Maybe that’s the wrong word, pal,” Gary explained. “The stage is just a solid platform built over the floor. Anyway, what do you guys think?”

“Let’s go look,” Ron suggested, “Might work and might not.”

They examined the stage and it was just what Gary had described. It was as good a place as any and it wouldn’t be that far from the tract. Clarence walked around back of the stage and found a trapdoor.

“There’s a door here, this might not be such a good idea,” Clarence said.

“Let me look,” Gary suggested. He shined a flashlight into the space under the stage. “This will work just fine. We’ll move the stuff tonight.”

When they got home, Gary went to Sharon.

“Do you still have some of that black cloth?” he asked.

“What black cloth?” Sharon asked.

“You know the stuff that sort of absorbs light?” Gary got specific.

“Yes, why?” she asked.

“I want to borrow it. Where is our staple gun?” he asked.

That night, they got several people to help them and they emptied out the basement. Everything went under the stage at Grecian Isles. Gary swept up some of the dust and then hung the light absorbing black cloth. Finally, he blew the dust from his palm over the area.

“Check it out,” Gary said.

Ron and then Clarence used their flashlights to look under the stage. You couldn’t tell there were anything there, the dust looked undisturbed and the cloth made the huge

space seem to go on forever. They left the Barrett in the trailer for easy access and returned home. This bomb shelter idea of Gary's was eating at the other two and Clarence announced that he was building a shelter, too. Ron said something like why not and they decided to build one in Amy's backyard while they were at it. Apparently Patti saw the goings on because Chris was soon in the back yard every evening digging a hole. He was too cheap to hire anyone; he was going to do it himself.

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Thanksgiving Day, 24Nov05...

There had never been a satisfactory explanation of the downing of the 747, and conspiracy theories were rampant. CNN was running a special against the football games. Ron and Clarence had gotten together to watch the games, but Gary was watching the CNN special. By the time the Special was over, Gary felt that it had raised more questions than it had answered. The White House had never identified the hijackers for one thing and it had been over 2 weeks. And, the controller who had been handling the flight couldn't be found. She had just plain vanished. CNN had been to her home, but it was sitting empty. There was no sign of her, her husband or their two kids. Strange.

25Nov05...

"Wes, I can't stand being cooped up in this house any longer," Gertrude said, "It's just like being in prison."

"Gert, it's just too risky," her husband answered.

"It's your face that everyone knows Wes," she replied, "I'm going to get Jim to drive me up to the mall in Palmdale, I have to get out."

He'd allowed his hair and beard to grow and bleached both. He didn't look anything like his photos. "We'll all get out for a while," Wes answered, "No one will recognize me."

Sharon had dragged Gary to the AV Mall. His feet couldn't take all of the walking, so he was plunked down on a bench while she ran hither and yon spending their precious money. Gary barely noticed the man and woman as they walked into the mall. He got up to get a Sundae at the Dairy Queen and overheard the man say something to his wife. There was something about the voice, but Gary couldn't place it. Gary got the large Hot Fudge Sundae and returned to his seat on the bench. About ½ way through the Sundae, it occurred to Gary where he'd heard the voice. He threw the Sundae in the trash and scurried to the Sheriff's Department counter.

"Deputy, do you see that man and woman over there?" Gary asked excitedly.

The Deputy gave them the once over and said, "Yeah, so what?"

“That’s Wesley Clark and I want my \$50 million,” Gary said.

“Wesley Clark is clean shaven, has dark hair and always wears a suit,” the Deputy said.

“Just go ask to see his ID, if I’m wrong, you can arrest me,” Gary insisted.

To make a long story short, the next thing you knew, Wesley and Gertrude Clark were in handcuffs. When the entire furor died down, Gary asked the Deputy, “Was it him?”

“Yes it was,” the Deputy replied.

“Where’s my check?” Gary asked.

“What check?’ the Deputy asked back.

“My check for \$50 million,” Gary said.

“Fill out this form,” the Deputy said, “The reward is \$50 million for information leading to the arrest AND CONVICTION of Mr. Clark. You’ll be paid if and when he is convicted.”

“Hey I’m 62, I might not live that long,” Gary said. “He’s arrested, how about half now and half later?”

“No?” Gary said. “I’m going to the newspapers. By the time they get done blowing this all out of proportion, you’ll be lucky to be walking a beat.”

CNN that night was a spectacle. They showed Clark and his wife in handcuffs. They had an interview with Gary Olsen of the Palmdale Militia. Olsen was telling how since Bush had shot down the 747 he and his friends had been subject to continual harassment by the USMS. Olsen also said that it didn’t seem fair; he should get half the reward now, because Clark had been arrested. With the American system of justice the way it was these days, he’d have to live to 100 to get his reward.

26Nov05...

The reporters seemed to know no bounds. They were ringing his doorbell incessantly. Finally Gary had had enough. He got his .32 and opened the door.

“All you folks get off my property,” Gary screamed, “Before I have to shoot one of you for trespassing.”

The reporters backed up to the sidewalk and stopped. The sidewalk was public property, they yelled back. Gary didn’t care and was about to let loose when 3 black Suburban’s pulled up.

“Now what?” he thought.

“Mr. Olsen, would you put the gun down please, I need to talk to you,” the same Marshal said.

“What do you want?” Gary snapped, “Going to go through the dirty laundry?”

Gary shoved the .32 into his back pocket and went into the house. The Marshal stood at the door waiting to be allowed entry.

“Well, come in and shut the door behind you,” Gary snapped. “Fucking reporters. There ought to be a law against them. What do you want?”

“Do you own anything besides those grubby jeans and holey golf shirt?” the Marshal asked.

“What if I do?” Gary snapped, “What business is that of yours? My friends and family saved the world and you’re harassing us.”

“Actually Mr. Olsen you only saved the country,” the Marshal grinned, “With a little help from the Pep Boys, the US Air Force, the 7th Cavalry Regiment and units from North Carolina.”

“You seem to be pretty well informed,” Gary said, “Got that from the file you didn’t show me, huh?”

“What file?” the Marshal asked.

“The one that told you I was a diabetic,” Gary said, “There was nothing in the FBI file you showed me but my old security clearances, gun permit applications and a letter of commendation from the ATF agent in Davenport. There was nothing about my diabetes.”

“I have orders to escort you and your two friends to Washington,” the Marshal said ignoring the comment.

“What, they got bigger jails in Washington?” Gary snapped.

“No, they have \$50 million checks and medals in Washington, DC,” the Marshal said.

“I suppose you want to me shave, too,” Gary said.

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When they finally arrived at LAX to be transported to the east coast, the other 46 members of the Palmdale Militia were waiting for them. Before he could ask, the Marshal told Gary that Marshals back in Iowa were escorting his sons to the airport and they would

meet them in Washington. They boarded the United Airlines 747 and took off for Washington. Gary spent the entire flight looking out the window trying to see the F-16 that was going to shoot them down over West Virginia. When they arrived in Washington, Derek was in dress uniform and Damon actually had a suit on. The Marshals must have bought it for him, Gary thought.

The 51 Members of the Palmdale Militia were led to a conference room and offered seats. Everyone was in uniform except Gary, Ron, Clarence and Damon. Finally, they were led into another room where the media was set up. The President entered, gave a short speech and began passing out Distinguished Service Medals to the men and women in uniform. Next, he presented Presidential Medals of Freedom to Ron and Clarence. It was finally Gary's turn. "He'll probably ask me if I want door number 1 or door number 2," Gary thought.

Bush presented Gary with the Presidential Medal of Freedom and a US Treasury check for \$50 million. During the photo session that followed, Gary finally had a chance to meet Bush.

"Tell me Mr. President, Gary asked, "Did we win the War on Terror yet?"

"Look Olsen," Bush said, "If it had been up to me, I'd have given you the booby prize."

"Can I take my vote back?" Gary asked.

Gary sat on the other side of the plane on the way back to California, still looking for the F-16.

29Nov05...

Enough of the clowning around; Gary had \$25 million and he wanted to spend it (did you forget the 40% US tax and the 9% California tax?). But when Sharon he and sat down to talk about it, they couldn't think of one thing that they needed that they didn't already have. \$25 million wouldn't get Gary his health back; they had a nice home and a small but steady income. They'd pay off the house and stick the rest of the money away for a rainy day. The price of gold was down and at \$310 per ounce they could buy about 5,530 pounds (advp) of gold. Or, 201 and a fraction of the Fort Knox sized gold ingots (400 troy ounces each). Well make it 200 and keep a few dollars of idle cash around, like maybe \$200,000. Heck, Gary could pave the floor of the basement with gold bricks, lay down a plywood floor and no one would be the wiser. And the taxes were more like 48.6%, so they'd have enough to pay off the house and keep about \$750k around. Decisions, decisions.

Preparations – Chapter 45 – The Building Project

30Nov05...

Gary answered the door, pistol in hand. He was going to shoot that reporter.

“Don’t shoot Gar-Bear,” Ron laughed, “I don’t work for CNN.”

“Good thing, I was going to shoot the next reporter who rang the doorbell,” Gary said.

“Well, what do you expect, you’re rich and famous,” Ron said.

“How about ½ rich and infamous,” Gary joked. “Taxes are going to eat up half the money.”

“You should have moved to Nevada, they don’t have income tax,” Ron said.

“Good idea, but it’s a little late now,” Gary said. “What the hell, it’s found money. I never did recognize him, but I knew the voice. Anyway, we’re going to pay off the house and buy some gold.”

“You’re going to keep a little cash around, right?” Ron asked.

“Some loose change, partner, maybe ¾ million or so,” Gary replied.

“Loose change my butt,” Ron said.

“What’s up besides my bank account?” Gary asked, “It’s pretty early in the morning for you to be out and about.”

“Oh, Clark tried to escape last night and they shot him,” Ron said.

“Likely story Ron, someone probably had to push him out of the door,” Gary commented.

“Either way, he’s dead, Gar-Bear,” Ron said.

“I wondered why they were so anxious to give up the whole \$50 million,” Gary observed.

“I had a couple of minutes to visit with Derek before we came back Ron,” Gary reported, “He sounds worried again.”

“What now?” Ron asked.

“He didn’t say, so either he didn’t know or he wasn’t willing to share,” Gary answered. “Said something about Damon and him moving to California permanently. And, before

you ask, he isn't interested in the money. Damon can get a job working for any insulation company and Derek is a pretty good parts man, so he won't have any trouble finding a job."

"No one ever said what he did," Ron noted.

"Works in the distribution warehouse for an auto parts chain," Gary told Ron.

"You're right, he won't have any trouble finding a job," Ron agreed, "So when are they coming?"

"Didn't say, but soon I hope," Gary replied.

"Why soon?" Ron asked, puzzled.

"I don't know and I wished that I did, pal," Gary answered softly. "Ask yourself something, who hijacked that plane? Why did Bush make the USA Patriot Act more invasive? Why did he add in the Assault Weapons Ban? Especially the AWB, Ron, hell, he was against it."

"Those are good questions Gary," Ron admitted, "I don't have any answers though."

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"How big a propane tank could we install in that big back yard you have?" Gary asked.

"It depends Gar-Bear," Ron said, "But probably a 30,000 gallon tank, why?"

"I'll tell you what, you talk to your friends at AmeriGas and find out," Gary suggested. "Put in the biggest tank you can and I'll pay for it."

"I think you're nuts, as usual, but ok," Ron said, "Anything else?"

"Yeah, Go around to everyone's home and find out what kind of hot water heaters, dryers and stoves they have," Gary said, "Most of them probably still have the original heaters and stoves, but check. Then, go to a parts house somewhere and get propane jets for all of those appliances. I'm going to buy a great big generator and put it in Amy's back yard. On second thought have AmeriGas put a great big propane tank in Amy's back yard too."

"That's a lot of money Gar-Bear," Ron said.

"It's blood money Ron, Wesley Clark's blood," Gary snapped, "And I don't want any part of it. I don't care how evil the man was, he deserved a fair trial before they shot him."

"Well ok. I'll get Clarence to get the stove and heater information and I'll talk to Ameri-

Gas,” Ron said, “How are you going to hook that generator in to all of the houses?”

“Hell, I don’t know, big extension cords? Gary laughed, “We’ll figure something out, I’ll hire the electrician that wired this whole housing tract. He’ll know what to do.”

Gary looked up Onan generators, but they weren’t big enough. He followed a link to cumminspower.com and found a 1.7 mw unit that ran on propane (C1700 N6). He figured that anything that ran on propane could be made to run on natural gas. There were 39 houses in the tract. Hell, figure 39 houses at 100 amps each. He needed 2 units, and he hoped they took gold. Turned out he had enough cash, but the generators that large were 3 phase. So, he bought Onan RS 30000s for each home without a generator. Ron ordered 2 60,000-gallon propane tanks. At 1.83 per gallon the propane alone would have cost over \$200k retail, but at that volume they gave Gary wholesale prices, saving him a bunch. Dick put an electrically controlled cutoff valve into the natural gas line where it fed into the housing tract and ran a line from the gasifier that Ron had on the tank on his property to tie into the gas system. He ran a second line from the gasifier to the lot where the other tank and gasifier were and they put in a remote controlled valve to switch between the two propane lines.

The contractor who originally wired the housing tract wired the generators into the electrical system. He reran the tract power feeds to the new transfer switches. Since the control units for the Cummins generators could be computer controlled, Gary popped for a cheap computer to control the generators and, the remote gas cutoff. There was a sense of urgency because Gary had finally carefully read the text of USA Patriot Act II. If Gary read it right, they would have better off under the late General Clark. Ron picked up the extra jets and kept them in the OP.

Finally, by consent of the entire group of homeowners, they converted Moon Shadows to a gated community. Two homeowners said they didn’t want to live in any survivalist village and Gary bought them out. Since the boys were on the way to California, Sharon suggested that they just give Amy the house she lived in and each of the boys one of those homes. Then someone else put his home on the market and Gary walked over and offered the guy cash for the house. They moved Lorrie and David in.

That blood money was coming in pretty handy after all. There was only one more thing to do, reassemble the Palmdale Militia. Gary bought the trailer park from the owner at a song because it was empty and half the trailers were shot up. (I wonder who did that?) Nobody claimed the trailers, so Gary slapped a lien of all of them for back rent and forced a Sheriff’s sale. Then, he moved the Palmdale Militia into the trailer park and told them their lots and trailers were rent free except for a prorated share of the water and the property taxes. But wait, there’s more. On the corner of Ave R and 45th street East, there was a vacant lot. Gary got a realtor to track down the owner and bought it for cash.

And, all the while gold prices were climbing like a skyrocket. Gary sold \$25 million in gold when it hit \$425 an ounce and still had over 25% of his gold left. He got AmeriGas

to put in a 100,000-gallon tank on the vacant lot and added more of the Cummins generators. While all of this was going on, they walled in the lot and put in another of those heavy-duty gates like the one they had installed on the Moon Shadows entrance. They surveyed the trailer park and bought jets for all of the hot water heaters and furnaces. Finally, they installed a water tower and a well on the lot and plumbed it into the water supplies for the tract and the trailer park, again with electrically controlled remote control switches. Everything was completed on Valentine's Day, 2006.

During subsequent testing of the computer controlled systems, the computer Gary had bought to run it crashed. That did it! Gary bought a server system and a computer for every home in the tract and the trailer park from Dell. Now, a lot of people swear by Dell and a lot of people swear AT Dell, but Gary got them to agree in writing to supply support from ONLY Texas and Florida, in real English. Just to make sure the system actually worked, Gary hired Dell to install the 1-gigabit system and network and make it work. Installation only took 2 weeks, but getting it to run took a month. Finally, he added a T-1 line, router and monster firewall to the server. And just think, this was all possible because Gary wanted a hot fudge Sundae from Dairy Queen in the mall (with nuts).

o

"Well Gar-Bear, are you broke yet?" Ron asked.

"With gold at \$450 an ounce?" Gary laughed, "Hell no. I still have 50 ingots partner. I think they're worth about \$9 million. And, I've got enough cash left to open a casino. What say we buy our own Hummers and 5-ton trucks?"

"I think that you've been spending money like a drunken sailor," Ron said.

"I haven't had so much fun in my life Ron," Gary smiled. "Hell, all of my kids have their own homes free and clear, we have our own private militia and we have gas, electricity and water. And just think, this was all possible because I wanted a hot fudge Sundae from Dairy Queen."

"Ok, we'll buy the vehicles," Ron said, "Anything else you want?"

"Yep. New web gear from Blackhawk, Camelback hydration systems, and the best sights we can get for our weapons," Gary said, "Do you need to write this down?"

"Nope," Ron said, "Keep going. However, a lot of what you want is LEO or military only."

"I don't care, make it happen, even if you have to use bribes," Gary said. "I want those Magnum Universal Night Sights on our Super Match and other sniper rifles."

"I may not have time," Ron said, "Kevin's at it again."

"Please just move him to one of those empty trailers Ron, I need you on this," Gary

said.

“Are you telling me or asking me?” Ron asked sharply.

“Asking, my friend,” Gary replied, “It’s none of my business, I know that. But I thought if Kevin had his own place, rent free, you wouldn’t have to worry about him and he’d only be a block away.”

“You misunderstood my point, but that’s ok,” Ron laughed, “Hell yes I’ll move him and pay rent if you want.”

“Not necessary, buddy,” Gary smiled, “Look, I read the new AWB portion of USA Patriot Act II very carefully. Bush screwed up. He didn’t make the .50BMG ammo illegal. So, I want some more of the Hornady 750gr A-MAX Match ammo. But, use a cutout even though it’s legal; and don’t give him your real name.”

“Is a cutout legal?” Ron asked.

“Not sure, that’s why I said don’t use your name,” Gary replied.

“Anything else?” Ron asked.

“Yeah, the M-24 SWS is still legal because it’s a bolt action so get 6 more,” Gary replied.

“I guess I’m going to need paper and pencil after all,” Ron grinned.

“I wrote it all down for you Chief,” Gary said, “And here, take this money, everything is cash only.”

“She might have some of this stuff,” Ron said.

“No way Jose,” Gary said, “She over charged me just a little too much, so get it elsewhere.”

“What is this crap,” Ron said looking at the list, “Winchester rifles and Ruger Vaqueros?”

“You missed the cowboy hats,” Gary winked, “The Three Amigos ride again.”

“What no horses?” Ron asked.

“I’m having Clarence get the horses’ pal,” Gary replied, “Told him to find me one named Salina.”

“You don’t even like horses,” Ron shook his head.

“I know, but it makes everyone laugh when I try to ride one,” Gary winced.

Preparations – Chapter 46 – And Other Assorted Things

23Mar06...

It was Gary's birthday and he was 63 on this day. They had run out of things to spend money on and Ron had acquired every single item on Gary list. Clarence had come up with 6 horses; including one he renamed Salina for Gary's benefit. Gary had bought the land between the housing tract and 47th street East and fenced it in. They knocked a hole in the block wall at the east end of Moonraker Road for access to the new land. Gary had gotten a semi-truckload of Alfalfa from the rancher on Avenue M and had a carpenter build a chicken coop. They had 2 milk cows and 2 750# feeder cattle. When they ran out of space to store the food Patti and Sharon were buying by the carload from Costco and Sam's Club, Gary just built another shed in the back yard. Gary was bound and determined to get rid of what he was calling the blood money, but the price of gold had gone up about \$5 a day for 5 weeks in a row. The price now stood at \$550 an ounce and Gary's 50 ingots were worth \$11 million.

The gold price was rising as fast as the economy was falling. The coup had a bad effect on the market and when Bush came back in, it didn't recover. Actually it was a lot worse and Lou Dobbs's replacement was sounding more like a doomsayer than a reporter. Bush was trying to feed the economy by building the Army back up to 15 Divisions, but recruiting had fallen off sharply. Damon had gotten a job with an insulation company and by some miracle still had it. Derek had gone to work down the street at Chief Auto parts and was making a lot more than he ever made in Iowa. The fact that the boys only had to pay property taxes and utilities was letting Gary's boys get back on their feet. Gary had wired Derek enough money for the move for both boys and enough for Derek to stop in Missouri and buy 4 cases of Kools 100s.

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On April 17th, the NYSE fell so badly that the circuit breakers kicked in and trading was suspended for an hour. Thirty minutes after trading resumed, they kicked for two hours. Thirty minutes after trading resumed again, the exchange was forced to close because the market had dropped 30%. The next day it started all over again, but the Governors of the NYSE closed the market when the stock had fallen only 20%. On the third day, the market closed after the stock had fallen only 10%. The NYSE failed to open the rest of the week. So did the American Stock Exchange and NASDAQ. Meanwhile the price of gold on the London market soared to a record high of \$1,250 (US) an ounce. The collapse of the market could not have occurred at a more fortunate time for Gary. With nothing left to buy, he had taken his remaining cash, all \$11 million, on his birthday and purchased gold at \$550 an ounce. He now had 100 bars of gold worth \$1,250 an ounce. (\$50 million)

It was worse than October 29, 1929. And, the effect was felt worldwide. It was the beginning of a depression. The President and his economic advisers tried to reassure the American people. Bush didn't impress anyone and you could hardly blame the people.

Andrew Johnson had been impeached for firing the Secretary of War, but not convicted. In 1998, as a result of issues surrounding personal indiscretions with a young woman White House intern, Clinton was the second US president to be impeached by the House of Representatives, but not convicted. Now, the House was blaming Dubya for the rules made by the Board of Governors of the NYSE and it looked like they might just impeach him, too. The vote to impeach failed by a single vote, but the damage was done. The problem, of course, was the media. CNN had Bush tried and convicted before the House even voted. After the vote, they began to claim that there were improprieties in the voting.

“Ronald, I knew I should have shot some of those SOB’s from CNN,” Gary said storming into the OP.

“Good morning to you too Gar-Bear,” Ron replied.

“Hi Clarence, how are you today?” Gary said.

“Not so good Gary, my pension was all tied up in the stock market, you know,” Clarence replied grimly.

“I know what you mean, Clarence,” Gary said, “My Iowa bank sold out all of the stocks on Tuesday, but my trust went down about 35% in value.”

“Maybe so,” Clarence said, “But I don’t have no basement full of gold.”

“Well hell, stop by on the way home and I’ll give a bar of gold,” Gary said, “You can’t eat gold and the good Lord knows that I have enough to go around.”

“You don’t understand Gary, I had over \$100,000 in my retirement account,” Clarence said.

“Well, then I’ll only give you 1/5 of a bar of gold if it will make you feel better, Clarence.

“Just how much is a bar of gold worth, Gary?” Clarence asked his eyes rather large.

“Last time I looked, \$500,000 my friend,” Gary said, “But if you only want \$100,000, I guess I could cut one up for you.”

“I wouldn’t want to cause you any extra work Gary,” Clarence said, “One bar will be just fine.”

“Hey, what about me?” Ron asked.

“Oh, good morning Ron,” Gary laughed, “I suppose you want a bar of gold too.”

“Hell yeah, I can wash the blood off,” Ron said.

“A, million here, a million there, pretty soon you’re talking about real money guys,” Gary shook his head.

“Did you think that up all on your own?” Ron asked.

“No. Everett Dirksen said it,” Gary said, “Except he said billion, not million. Come on; let’s go get those gold bars. Only take a piece of advice, don’t take dollars for it. Get gold and silver Eagles and pre-65 silver.”

“You’re not serious are you?” Clarence asked.

“Clarence, I got \$50 million for turning Clark in, Gary started to lecture, “The government took half. I bought 200 bars of gold at \$310 (\$24,800,000), sold 150 at \$425 (\$25,500,000), bought 50 more at \$550 (\$11,000,000) and it’s now worth \$1,250 (\$50,000,000). The more I spend, the more I get. Hell yes I’m serious.”

“You’re acting like you’re the richest man in the world,” Clarence observed.

“I just may be partner,” Gary said, “Bill Gates had most of his money tied up in Microsoft stock.”

o

Things were starting to turn ugly around the country, so they dug out the guns and ammo from under the stage and took those new 5-ton trucks down to the storage facility and emptied out the locker.

“We don’t have enough beef,” Ron announced.

“We have two steers and two cows,” Gary recalled.

“Yeah and I like pork chops,” Clarence added.

“You’re the livestock expert, Clarence,” Gary said, “Go buy some steers, cows, a bull, a boar and some sows. By the way, why doesn’t that horse answer to Salina?”

“I don’t know, Gary,” Clarence replied, “Maybe she’s deaf in her right ear, too.”

Clarence got two pregnant sows and a boar. That meant they needed a hog house so they bought a prefabricated wood building and got some of the neighbors to help erect it. It never got that cold in Palmdale, so they just put up a horse port for the horses in case of rain or snow. One day the wind shifted and Clarence caught a whiff of the hog manure. He went to talk to Gary about it.

“Gary, what’s that awful smell?” Clarence asked.

“You mean the hog crap?” Gary asked. “My Dad used to call that the smell of money.”

“Used to tell stories too,” Gary continued, “Like the one about the guy who died in the round barn.”

“What did he die from?” Clarence fell for it.

“He drowned, Clarence, trying to find a corner to pee in,” Gary said straight faced.

“You really think we’re going to need these guns?” Clarence got a little more serious.

“I hope not buddy,” Gary replied, “But you never know, do you? I watched some of those old films on the History Channel; the 1930’s were pretty tough all over the world, but especially in the US. Hitler revived the Germany economy by building that massive war machine of his. You know, he would have won the Second World War if he hadn’t been such a nut. But, he just had to go and invade Russia and the rest is history, so they say.”

“Bush seems to be trying to do the same thing, but he can’t get no volunteers,” Clarence observed.

“That was then Clarence,” Gary replied ruefully, “We headed for a depression and he’ll get more volunteers than he can use.”

“Say he does, so what?” Clarence asked.

“He’ll probably start a war somewhere to jump start the economy,” Gary suggested.

“Where?” Clarence asked.

“I would have said Mexico,” Gary prognosticated, “But according to CNN, there’s more Mexicans moving south than north.”

“Aw, he wouldn’t really start a war,” Clarence insisted.

“He wouldn’t huh?” Gary asked. “Ever hear of the War on Terror? Afghanistan and Iraq didn’t invade the US.”

“But they knocked down the World Trade Center on 9/11,” Clarence protested.

“Who hijacked that 747 full of Veteran’s, Clarence?” Gary asked.

“Al Qaeda, maybe?” Clarence offered.

“If it would have been al Qaeda, Bush would been all over the news saying, ‘See, I told

you so',” Gary noted. “I haven’t heard one word about who was responsible.”

“Are you saying Bush was behind it?” Clarence asked. “I don’t believe that for one minute.”

“Clarence, that’s the problem, I don’t know who was behind it,” Gary said. “And, the media isn’t speculating either. Did you ever know the media not to speculate on everything?”

“Can’t say so,” Clarence admitted. “I have to go, Gary, talk to you later.”

“Ciao,” Gary said. Gary walked down to Ron’s.

“Howdy partner,” Ron greeted him.

“Hey Ron how are you feeling?” Gary asked.

“I’ll get by,” Ron said, “What’s up?”

“Clarence was over and we got to talking,” Gary reported.

“What about?” Ron inquired.

“Lots of things,” Gary said, “But nothing in particular. I was thinking; we got that T-1 line right?”

“Yeah what about it?” Ron asked.

“Let’s put in a 2 more T-1 lines and our own phone equipment,” Gary suggested.

“What the hell for?” Ron asked, “You still trying to get rid of the blood money?”

“No, not at all,” Gary said, “But it would tighten up our security a bunch.”

“Where are you going to put this phone system?” Ron wanted to know.

“How about Kevin’s bedroom,” Gary smiled, “That way the kid can’t move back in on you.”

“All right, Gar-Bear,” Ron grinned, “Now you’re talking.”

The three old geezers hired a contractor and he installed the phone equipment in Kevin’s bedroom. Even Linda seemed to like the idea. It was a chore rerouting all of the phone lines down to Ron’s house, but the job was done the Friday before Memorial Day 2006. They incorporated the Homeowner’s Association, just in case. And, Gary ordered up a bunch of sackrete, mortar and concrete blocks and stored them near the water

tower, right next to the truckload of barbed wire.

Preparations – Chapter 47 – Who’s Crazy?

Saturday, 24Jun06...

Linda had invited Lucy and Sharon down for coffee. Apparently, she had something on her mind.

“Sharon, is Gary ok?” Linda asked.

“What do you mean ok?” Sharon said.

“You know, he’s turned this whole housing tract into almost a fortress,” Linda explained.

“I’m not so sure Gary has been ok for a long time, Linda,” Sharon replied. “When they shot Wesley Clark, he got to feeling real guilty. You’ve heard him ranting and raving about the Constitution several times. That was his best subject in Law School and he’s been a nut about the Constitution since before I ever met him.”

“I didn’t know Gary was a lawyer,” Lucy said.

“He’s not,” Sharon explained. “Law School gave him ulcers and he dropped out. Sometimes he gets to talking about how every lawyer in the country has nothing but situational ethics.”

“What are situational ethics?” Lucy asked.

“That’s where you change your ethics to suit the situation,” Sharon said.

“Oh, I see what you mean,” Lucy said. “Clarence says that Gary has some pretty hard and fast ideas about things.”

“Lucy, you don’t know the half of it,” Sharon smiled. “He gets mad if I don’t fold his jockeys in a certain way. He told me that his mother used to iron his t-shirts and jockeys.”

“Do you?” Linda asked.

“Are you kidding?” Sharon asked. “I wait until he’s down to his last t-shirt and pair of shorts before I do laundry. It positively drives him nuts.”

“Isn’t that a little risky?” Lucy asked.

“Gary’s mostly bark, unless you really get him angry,” Sharon explained. “He’s got what they call a German temper. He just bottles it up, but when he explodes, watch out.”

“That explains a lot,” Linda said. “Ron is just the opposite.”

"I've only seen Clarence mad a couple of times in 30 years," Lucy said.

"Well, you take that German temper and his natural passive-aggressive personality and Gary is a time bomb, just going tick, tick, tick," Sharon said.

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"How's the job working out Derek?' Gary asked.

"Ok Dad, but I wish I was back in Iowa," Derek replied.

"What's Iowa got that they don't have 2 of in California?" Gary inquired.

"Peace, solitude and my Abrams tank," Derek said.

"I can't do anything about the peace and solitude, son," Gary said, "But I'll buy you an Abrams tank if you really want one."

"Sure Dad, you're just going to run down to White's Surplus and buy two because they're on sale right?" Derek kidded.

"No, I was thinking about paying someone to steal one for you," Gary explained. "What is your favorite model, the M1A2SEP?"

"You're crazy Dad," Derek said.

"That's what everyone keeps telling me Derek," Gary laughed, "But I just ignore them. Do you want that in Olive Drab or Desert Camo?"

"Desert Camo," Derek replied, certain that Gary was just clowning around. "And, be sure to get extra tracks, engine parts and lots of that 120mm ammo while you're at it."

You've heard the expression, 'take two, they're small' right? Gary went over to the trailer park and announced he had a bar of gold for anyone who could deliver 2 Abrams M1A2SEP tanks with spare tracks, engine parts and 1,000 rounds of ammo. Oh, and they had to have a Desert Camo paint job, too. Most of the Palmdale Militia thought Gary was nuts. (Join the club, folks.) But Roy, Jim, Doc, Becky and a couple of the others thought it was a good idea.

Saturday, 01Jul06...

"We'll take that bar of gold Gary," Roy said.

"You actually got 2 Abrams?" Gary asked. "How? Where?"

"Can't say," Roy smiled, "But it was mighty hot up near Barstow."

“And the spare parts and ammo?” Gary asked.

“Everything you wanted,” Roy said. “We even picked up some camo netting to cover the things.”

“Where are they?” Gary asked.

“Down by the water tower next to the barbed wire and concrete blocks,” Roy replied, “What’s that stuff for?”

“I had this idea,” Gary explained. “I figured that if TSHTF, we could put a block wall from the wall on the lot to the trailer park wall across 45th street on the north and the south. I’ll be down in a minute to check out those tanks and give you your gold.”

“We’ll be waiting,” Roy said.

“With gold up to \$1,400 an ounce,” Gary thought, “I’ll bet you’ll be waiting.”

Gary walked over to Derek’s and told Derek he needed his help delivering a gold bar. They went back to the house, got a gold bar and Derek lugged the bar down to the lot.

“Now, check out under those camo nets over there,” Gary said, “And if what you find meets with your approval, give Roy that gold bar.”

Derek laid the gold bar down and lifted the net. “DAD!” he hollered.

“I guess they’re ok Roy, and thanks,” Gary said.

Roy picked up the gold bar and the 6 of them headed back to the trailer park.

“Somebody is going to lock you up and throw away the key,” Derek announced.

“Not if I see them coming,” Gary said. “You have 2 tanks, 1,000 rounds of ammo and spare parts. Happy birthday.”

“My birthday was in March, Dad,” Derek said.

“Well, happy 4th of July,” Gary said, “Always with the fricking details.”

o

Lorrie’s birthday was July 5th and Sharon suggested that they have a barbeque on the 4th of July and celebrate Independence Day and Lorrie’s birthday at the same time. Gary complained that he hated barbeque, but changed his tune when Sharon said that Ron would be doing the cooking. Lorrie was going to be 39 and that sort of made Sha-

ron feel old, if you know what I mean.

Tuesday, 04Jul06...

One of the advantages of a gated housing tract was that you could lock the gate and have a party right in the street. Ron and Clarence had invited the entire Palmdale Militia to the party and somewhere in the process it had turned into a beer bust and barbeque. It was just like every other 4th of July at Moon Shadows, but this time, there were about 200-300 people. A stereo was set up playing Gary's collection of Time/Life '50's and '60's music. There was the usual volleyball game on Dick's lawn and several people had bought fireworks for later in the evening. Thankfully, the wind was out of the west. The big meal was going to be served around 4pm and Gary, Clarence and Ron were just sitting there watching Ron almost burn the meat. Around 3 o'clock, Gary went into the house for some more lemonade. Someone had left the TV on, tuned to the Communist News Network (CNN).

...bombing on the Mall in Washington. The announcer said. Gary forgot all about the barbeque and beer bust and sat down and turned the volume up. Ron came looking for Gary around 4pm but Gary just waived him into silence. CNN was saying that no one had claimed responsibility for the bombing. The President was expected to make an announcement later from his ranch in Crawford, Texas. The death toll was high, but not staggering and a lot of people had been injured in the series of blasts. Gary turned the TV off and said, "Let's eat."

"Aren't you going to listen to the President's speech?" Ron asked.

"What for?" Gary asked, "So I can hear him say that the FBI is investigating and they will bring whoever did it to swift retribution? If you believe that, I've got some oceanfront property in Arizona."

"George Strait, 1987," Ron said.

"Ron, I'm not in the mood, ok?" Gary said, "Let's eat."

"Sheesh," Ron said, "What's got you in an uproar?"

"It's starting," Gary said.

"What's starting?" Ron asked.

"TEOCAWKI," Gary said, "Come on, I'm hungry."

"What's TEOCAWKI mean?" Ron asked.

"The End Of Civilization As We Know It," Gary answered.

“Damn, that happened on Valentine’s Day last year,” Ron said, “This is just more of the SOS.”

“What’s SOS?” Gary asked.

“Same Old Crap,” Ron said, “Man you are out of touch; you know that?”

Gary had quit listening. He was thinking how Wesley Clark had started the ball rolling downhill and Dubya had come along and given it a kick. Unlikely? Maybe, but the President hadn’t been the same since Clark had locked him up for 2 months. And as hard as Gary tried to get rid of the blood money, he was now up to \$55+ million in gold. The Scotch in him wouldn’t let him just give the gold away, and he couldn’t seem to spend it fast enough. I wouldn’t mind having those problems, would you?

Ron was busy filling in everyone on what was happening. Gary filled his plate and sat down to eat.

“Dad, do you want me to fire the tanks up?” Derek asked.

“Nope, nobody knows we have them and I’d like to keep it that way,” Gary said.

“All of a sudden you’re taking a low profile?” Derek snorted.

“You sound like the Palmdale City Council,” Gary replied. “They told me I couldn’t put up that water tower.”

“Yes, and…” Derek asked.

“I told them screw you if they can’t take a joke,” Gary answered.

“What did they say?” Derek asked.

“They sued me and tried to get an injunction,” Gary explained.

“AND…” Derek asked again.

“You see a water tower over there, right?” Gary said.

“Yes, so what?” Derek said.

“I hired me a fancy lawyer and the case will drag on until I’m dead,” Gary said. “After that, I won’t care. If you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em.”

Preparations – Chapter 48 – Wishing and Hoping

04Jul06...

*Wishing and hoping and
thinking and praying,
planning and dreaming
each night of his charms
that won't get you into his arms,
so if you're looking to find love
you can share, all you gotta do,
is hold him and kiss him, and love him
and show him that you care*

*Show him that you care just for him,
do the things that he likes to do,
wear your hair just for him,
cause you won't get him, thinking and a praying
wishing and a hoping*

*Just wishing and hoping
and thinking and praying
and planning and dreaming
his kisses will start...
that won't get you into his heart...
so if your thinking how great true love is
all you gotta do is...*

*Hold him and kiss him and squeeze him and love him
just do it and
after you do, you will be his*

*Show him that you care just for him,
do the things that he likes to do,
wear your hair just for him,
cause you won't get him
thinking and a praying
wishing an a hoping*

*Just wishing and hoping and thinking and praying
planning and dreaming
his kisses will start...
that won't get you into his heart
so if your thinking how great true love is
all you gotta do.....*

*Is hold him and kiss him
and squeeze him and love him
just do it and after you do
you will be his....
you will be his.....
you..will..be..his.....*

Gary was wishing and hoping that the nightmare would just go away. He missed the old music, especially the Dionne Warrick/Dusty Springfield tune. "Wish in one hand and spit in the other," he thought. Well, first they executed Clark before the trial. Then the 747 had been shot down. Now, a bomb of unclaimed origin had gone up on the Mall in the Capital.

Maybe he was crazy, but it paid to be prepared. It was a lot more fun getting prepared when they didn't have any money, too. Every single thing they got had been a tradeoff. Now, He had just done things like telling Ron and Clarence to get prescriptions for a 3-year supply of meds and paid cash. No more physicians' samples to deal with. This was positively un-fun. No more struggling with the 2,000-gallon propane tanks and the 3,000-gallon water tanks either. They still had them, but the water tower held 300,000-gallons of water and the propane tanks had 220,000 gallons of propane. By the time they got to their reserves...

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"US Marshal, open the gate," the man in the suit said.

Gary was on his way over to the trailer park when he'd pulled up. Well, if it wasn't his old friend, 'make you pee your pants'.

"What do you want now?" Gary said, "The water tower is local jurisdiction, not federal; and I hid the guns someplace else."

"Would you let me in please?" the Marshal said.

"Make that pretty please with sugar on it," Gary smirked.

"All Right Darn It, Pretty Please With Sugar On It!" the Marshal almost pleaded.

Gary motioned for them to open the gate a crack and started to walk back to the house. The Marshal rushed to catch up with him, which wasn't hard, considering.

"I said, what do you want now Marshal," Gary said without looking back.

"I brought your other file as a show of good faith," the Marshal said loudly to make certain Gary heard.

Gary stopped and then slowly turned around. "You must want something pretty bad if you're willing to give up that file Marshal," Gary said.

"I do Mr. Olsen. I need somewhere to hide," the Marshal said.

"From who or what?" Gary asked, interested.

"It's a long story," the Marshal said.

"Well, I seem to have a lot of free time lately, so come up to our office and you can explain it to Ron, Clarence and me at the same time," Gary said. "You remember Ron and Clarence, right Marshal, they're the other two guys your storm troopers arrested for questioning and then didn't question."

"I remember," the Marshal said.

They went into Ron's home and to the second floor. Clarence and Ron were sitting there half amused and more than a little amazed.

"I told you guys they had a second file on me," Gary said waiving the file in the air.

"What's in it?" Ron asked.

"I have no idea, except maybe my medical history, but we'll look at it later," Gary said, "The Marshal here is looking for somewhere to hide."

"Do tell," Ron said.

"You can start off by telling us your name Marshal," Gary said.

"Marshall Thomas, Mr. Olsen," the man said.

"I know you're a Marshal, but is Thomas your first name or last name?" Gary said.

"My first name is Marshall with two 'L's' and my last name is Thomas," Marshal replied.

"A Marshal named Marshall," Gary said, "Never mind, I won't go there. So what's the story Marshal?"

"I don't know if you know it, but there's been a nearly complete media blackout for some time," Marshall said.

"Go on," Gary said.

"The CIA was behind the hijacking of that 747," Marshall said.

“There was a lot of speculation about that on one of the forums I visit,” Gary said.

“Frugal Squirrel’s?” Marshall said. “I read all of it and they were right.”

“What about Clark?” Gary asked.

“Shot him then shoved him out the door,” Marshall replied.

“And yesterday’s bombing on the Mall in DC?” Gary pressed.

“Another Company project,” Marshall said.

“And, where does our old pal Dubya fit into the whole scenario?” Gary asked.

“The DCI is the head of the Agency, but he only takes orders from one man,” Marshall replied.

“What’s next on the agenda?” Ron asked.

“Have you read USA Patriot Act II closely?” Marshall asked.

“I went over it with a fine toothed comb,” Gary said, “They screwed up and didn’t ban .50 cal ammo.”

“You could have purchased directly, you know Ron,” Marshall said, “You didn’t need to use a straw man.”

“Get back to the point,” Gary said.

“The point is that you can’t do anything that some federal agency doesn’t know about,” Marshall said. “The 4th Amendment is worthless, they can do a no knock search without a warrant and they’ve even computerized library records.”

“I thought Congress made a stink about that 2 years ago,” Gary said.

“They did, but USA Patriot Act II restored everything Congress cut out and eliminated the Sunset clauses. It also gave the government more power,” Marshall said. “Like the Assault Weapons Ban. Bush said if Congress renewed the ban that he’d sign it, remember?”

“Ron asked you what’s next on the agenda, Marshal,” Gary said, “Please answer the question.”

“I would if I could, but I don’t know,” Marshall said.

“What brings you here?” Gary asked.

“You guys have a lot of guns, 2 tanks, 2 Mk-19’s, 2 Ma Deuces, 4 truckloads of munitions not counting the stuff you stole from Walmart, propane, water, generators and a shelter I can hide in,” Marshall said.

“Is there anything you don’t know about us?” Gary asked.

“Not much, but it’s all in your file and I destroyed the only other copy,” Marshall said.

“What are you running from?” Gary asked.

“FEMA is going to raid this place tomorrow night and lay the blame on my doorstep,” Marshall said. “They’re going to say I had a grudge against you guys because you got me in trouble for arresting you and not questioning you.”

“We didn’t get you in trouble,” Clarence protested.

“I couldn’t get that file Clarence,” Marshall said, “But it is a pretty elaborate ruse.”

“So, when is this big attack supposed to take place?” Ron asked.

“0400 tomorrow morning,” Marshall said.

“Are they coming straight up from LA or are they assembling somewhere in the area?” Gary asked.

“They’re already here,” Marshall said. “Camped out big as you please in the Mall parking lot.”

“In front of Gottschalk’s?” Gary asked.

“Yes, why?” Marshall asked.

“Oh nothing really,” Gary smiled. “We have a little experience with that parking lot.”

“There are a lot of them,” Marshall said, “Probably over 100.”

“Ok, you know where the shelter is and how to get into it, right?” Gary asked.

“Does that mean I can stay?” Marshall asked.

“For now,” Gary replied.

“Hey about that other thing, I am very, very sorry,” Marshall said.

After Marshall had been taken to the shelter in Gary’s back yard and tucked away, Ron

asked, "So the same as last time?"

"Yep, but only ½ of the Militia, and this time, tell Derek to pick up their weapons," Gary said.

Gary went home and read the file. Then, he took it out to the charcoal grill and burned it. Nobody needed to know what was in THAT file, not ever. So far as those FEMA folks went, they would do the same thing to them that they did to the Command Post the year before. They had more sniper teams now and all of the rifles were properly equipped.

They could probably get maybe half of the people before they even knew they were under attack. They'd better do this thing right after dark, too. Maybe that Marshal Marshall was telling the truth and maybe not. If they kept half of the Militia here at the compound, it really wouldn't make any difference. Of course, this probably meant the start of something that was going to last for a very long time. But, like Gary had said, he had all of the time in the world. And, the only difference between their Hummer's and the GI version was that Chris had put in a LOT of Kevlar and armor plate. It had been real nice of Roy to pick up the ring mounts for the Mk-19's and Ma Deuces, too.

Preparations – Chapter 49 – FEMA

It was almost 10pm by the time it got dark enough to move the Militia into place. It was just 12 sniper teams this time, armed with 6 M-24SWS and 6 .50caliber rifles. And, unlike the last time, they had also put snipers up on the roof of the Mall itself. The FEMA folks were surrounded. Derek looked through his binoculars and noticed that the FEMA guys had something that look a lot like MP5's, but with subtle differences that he couldn't identify. "Maybe these are the 10mm versions," he thought.

The MP5/10 was the first attempt by HK to manufacture the MP5 in a more powerful caliber than 9mm. 10mm Auto, also called the Centimeter, is one hot caliber. At the time of the request for this new caliber, the FBI was hot on this cartridge, since the .40 Smith & Wesson had not yet been invented. It was the FBI that provided the substantial financial motivation for HK to retool for the more powerful caliber. FBI has about 1,400 of these MP5s in inventory, but aside from them, the 10mm MP5 has been eclipsed by the sale of the much more popular MP5/40.

In a concession to American preference, a bolt hold open device was added. The model had the early translucent magazines reminiscent of the new G36 series magazines. MP5/10 and MP5/40 magazines are now light blue polymer, or flat black, and are not transparent.

HKPRO is a big fan of Tom Clancy, who is a big fan of HK. I was so disappointed when reading *Rainbow Six* and Clancy's referral to the MP5/10 as the MP-10. It is still correctly called the MP5 or MP5/10, not MP-10 as in *Rainbow Six*. A small price to pay for the greatness of Clancy's work. Likewise, the MP5/40 is often referred to incorrectly as the MP-40. That is the name of a WWII era German submachine gun of completely different lineage.

UPDATE: These guns are now discontinued, but will be supported with parts and service. The advent of the UMP has supplanted the market for these guns, and it will be available at least in .40 caliber in addition to .45 but probably not 10mm, due to the direction of the market away from this caliber.

[Just thought you'd like to know the real story.]

This time, they started in the middle and worked their way out. Because Ron had said to get the weapons, the snipers' observers took on the stragglers with their M16's rather than their M203's. It took longer and the affair became rather noisy because of the return fire. The LA County Sheriff's Department began flooding the area with cars, but when they realized that FEMA was being taken out by some rather skillful marksmen, they left in a hurry before they were mistaken for the FEMA people. Good move, guys! The firefight lasted a while; some of the FEMA people had found cover, but eventually... The Militia snipers slung their rifles and switched to their M-16's. The 24 individuals approached the parking lot with a great deal of care, unsure how many were dead and how many were wounded.

“What are those?” Damon asked, looking at the submachine guns.

“I think it’s the 10mm version of the MP5,” Derek said. “Get all of the handguns, too. I think we’re going to switch to 10mm. You know how much I like the 10mm cartridge. The FBI bought some, but I don’t know where FEMA came up with these.”

“Sears & Roebuck?” Damon suggested.

The militia loaded the weapons, spare magazines and ammo into their 2 5-ton trucks. They returned to the housing tract with the Sheriff’s Department in trail. Johnny, Darlene’s ex-husband, must have lost the coin toss, because he was at the gate wanting to be let in to see the three old geezers.

“Hi, Johnny,” Gary said, “Here to try and seize the guns?”

“No. But listen guys, Palmdale cleaned up pretty good after that business last year so how about you keep the fighting out of town?” Johnny asked.

“They were here to make a raid on us,” Ron raised his voice.

“We know and we refused to participate,” Johnny replied.

“You also seem to have forgotten to warn us,” Clarence observed.

“Listen, Freedom Medals or not, you three bums are going to the slammer if there’s any more shooting in Palmdale,” Johnny snapped.

“Just try butthead,” Ron said, “We got more guns and ammo than you do and we don’t have to have probable cause. But, we weren’t planning on operating in Palmdale anyway. Someone suggested that with the money and equipment we have, we should terrorize the government.”

“Crap Ron,” Gary said, “Why don’t you give them the date and time of our next attack while you’re at it?”

“I would if we knew where and when that was,” Ron said.

“Anything else Johnny?” Gary asked.

“You’ve been warned,” Johnny said and left.

“What do you mean you’d tell them the date and time of our next attack?” Gary growled.

“I’d lie,” Ron smiled.

Derek and Damon walked into the OP.

"I presume it went well," Gary said.

"We got about 100 of those 10mm MP5's," Derek said, and pistols to go with them."

"What about magazines and ammo?" Ron asked.

"Plenty of mags," Damon offered, "But not much ammo. Maybe a couple of reloads."

"Ronald, we need ammo for those weapons," Gary said, "Call HER up and tell HER we want 100,000 rounds of whatever those feds have in their weapons. And tell HER if she tries to gouge me again I going to personally invite her to meet her maker."

"Dad, we got 100 SMG's and 100 pistols, more or less," Derek said.

"Ok, 250,000 rounds, but tell HER she can only mark the stuff up 5% over cost and shipping," Gary said. "Did you want to say something else Derek?"

"Never mind," Derek said. "How about we equip everyone with a 10mm SMG and a 10mm pistol in addition to his or her regular rifle?"

"Suits me," Gary said.

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The next target was going to be the federal building on Wilshire Blvd. They were cruel to their prisoners and made them wet their pants. Gary figured 2 truckloads of ANFO mix would do nicely. It ought to blow the building halfway to Santa Monica. And, why rent trucks? They could steal a couple and Ryder could file an insurance claim.

07Jul06...

"Did you get the ammo yet, Ron?" Gary asked.

"No, it has to come from the factory or distributor or someplace like that," Ron explained.

"The price?" Gary asked.

"\$195 a case, delivered," Ron replied. "And no trail to us. So, who are we going to kill next?"

"We need a semi load of 45-0-0 fertilizer, some nitro methane fuel, oil drums, caps and dynamite," Gary said, "How about we do a Timothy McVey?"

"It's a long way to Oklahoma City," Ron chuckled, "You really want to get out of town. Johnny got you spooked?"

"Right track, wrong train," Gary explained, "I was thinking of me wetting my pants."

"Good, that's only about a 2 hour drive," Ron said. "What about trucks?"

"Steal a couple," Gary said. "Delivered when?"

"The ammo?" Ron asked, "Wednesday."

OK, we'll hit on Thursday around noon," Gary said.

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13Jul06...11:45am...

They had mixed up the AFNM in 55-gallon drums. As they placed the drums in the truck the night before, Roy had taken care of the dynamite and fusing. He'd used det cord and conventional blasting caps so this ought to be quite the fireworks display. Gary had no idea what Roy had rigged up to initiate the explosion, but as long as it gave them time to get a long ways away, it was fine by him. Ron, Clarence and he were parked in the parking lot of the Getty Museum in Sepulveda Pass. In barely 15 minutes, the Palmdale Militia was going to send Bush a message, but they weren't going to claim credit, let al Qaeda or some other terrorists get the blame.

It turned out to be a good thing that they had their windows rolled down, for it was a massive explosion and almost perfectly timed. Well, if you seen one cloud, you've seen them all, it was time to go back to Palmdale. They followed Roy and Becky and Jim back to Palmdale. On the way back, Gary picked out their second target in his mind. However, 2 Ryder rental trucks would be a little obvious so they would use a semi tractor-trailer rig this time. When they pulled in to the tract, Gary told Roy to get busy on the next bomb. They were going to set it off on Saturday to minimize the loss of life and it was 400 miles away.

Bush hadn't even gotten the FBI report on the explosion before another bomb went off in Salt Lake City at the Bennett Federal Office Building on Saturday, 15Jul06. The following Monday, they reviewed their successes. They were out of fertilizer and it wouldn't do to buy any, it would probably raise a red flag. On the other hand, Fresno was farming country and anhydrous ammonia was pretty good explosive. How about stealing a truckload or two of anhydrous.

The LEO's would just chalk it up to some meth manufacturers and wouldn't give them a second thought. Gary went out on the net to see if the idea had any merit. "Explosive when mixed with chlorinated materials such as hypochlorites. Forms nitrogen trichloride, which explodes spontaneously in air. Reacts similarly with other halogenated materials."

Nope, it wouldn't work and it was a cryogenic anyway. But wait, what if they just blew up a tanker full of anhydrous by itself? Good idea. And, it wouldn't take much dynamite, either.

The next target had to be something good, too. Hmm, how about Seattle, it rained in Seattle and that meant the relative humidity would be high and... On Wednesday, 19Jul06, a tanker containing and estimated 10,000-gallons of anhydrous ammonia exploded near the Space Needle on Seattle's north side. Authorities were at a loss to explain the explosion. The explosion happened at 3am, greatly reducing the casualties one might have expected had the explosion occurred at the height of rush hour or later in the day. CNN was suggesting that the recent explosions, the one in LA, the one in Salt Lake City and the one in Seattle were no doubt the result of a terrorist campaign. One reporter, or was that a guest, speculated that there was probably a tie in with the hijacking of the 747 and the explosions on the Mall.

This was obviously the work of al Qaeda FOX News suggested, after all, who else had the resources and wherewithal to manage a campaign like this. Homeland Security raised the terrorist threat level to Orange. In Palmdale, the three old geezers didn't have time to watch TV; they were busy planning the next attack by al Qaeda. They hadn't done a post office yet, so maybe they should do the mail center in West Des Moines, Iowa. If they went to Iowa and bought the fertilizer onsite, they could do another ANNM device. Midnight seemed like a good time, too. Maybe the FBI would attribute this one to some employee 'going postal' but it was unlikely.

"Do you suppose Bush has the message yet?" Clarence asked.

"What message is that Clarence; that he has competition for the terrorist of the year award?" Ron laughed.

"Does anyone know how to rig up a large stink bomb?" Gary asked. "We could set it off in Little Rock and send an anonymous letter to a paper claiming that the smell was from Clinton coming back to town."

"That's too complicated Gar-Bear," Ron suggested. "Anyway, they're probably used to the smell so it wouldn't fly."

"I still like Little Rock as a target, so why don't the two of you get your thinking caps on and come up with something," Gary suggested.

"Thinking gives me a headache," Ron said.

"Probably puts too much stain on that ounce of grey matter between your ears Ronald," Clarence said.

"Nah," Ron said, "They checked and said I wouldn't get headaches if I had that many brains. This is Gary's idea so he should come up with something."

Preparations – Chapter 50 – Objections & Objectives

“Dad, you guys have got to stop this!” Derek said, “Blowing up one building and hurting people was bad enough. After that you guys seemed to go out of your way just to disrupt things, which was okay. But now I hear that you’re going to blow up a post office sorting center. I happen to know that people work 24/7 in that facility, Dad. You can’t do that.”

“But Derek, we called in a bomb threat and gave them plenty of time to evacuate,” Gary said. “I wouldn’t exactly call 3 ATF agents getting killed a major massacre. The bomb in Salt Lake went off on a Saturday and the anhydrous was released at 3am, for crying out loud.”

“That’s true, but this postal center thing is going to get a lot of lowans killed,” Derek said. “I won’t let you do it.”

“You won’t, huh?” Gary said, his ire rising.

“That’s right, I won’t,” Derek said, “And another thing, why are you guys using ANFO anyway? It’s a low order explosive.”

“Derek, ANFO is the most commonly used explosive in the world today,” Gary said, “Besides, we’re using ANNM.”

“Dad, they’ve got tons of explosives at Ft. Irwin,” Derek said. “Real explosives and Roy is trained to use them.”

“What kind of explosives?” Gary wanted to know.

“Oh just your usual military assortment, C-4, and the special munitions,” Derek replied, “But being you’re so flush with gold, why don’t you just buy explosives?”

“Derek, what I know about explosives could be written on a postage stamp,” Gary protested.

“Well, if you’re going to play with the big boys toys, I suggest that you read up on the subject,” Derek said. “I wrote down a couple of websites where you can learn the basics.”

“Ok, I’ll read,” Gary agreed, “I suppose that I’d better stop Roy from making that ANNM for the post office, huh?”

“I already did, Dad,” Derek said. “And as long as all you do is disrupt and mess with the government, I’m with you on this. But, you go around killing people and you aren’t my Dad anymore.”

So, Gary read the information on the net. The first document was a nice summary, but the second was full of formulas and went right over Gary's head. Three hours of steady reading gave him a six-hour headache. And obviously, he was way out of his league when it came to playing with explosives. Gary had avoided commercial explosives for one very simple reason. Commercial explosives, by law, had tags that would allow the LEO's to trace the explosives.

He guessed as long as they didn't buy the commercial explosives, they might be ok to use. On the other hand, the more people one got involved in a project, the greater the risk of exposure. So, this was going to have to be an inside job, using their people.

Now, the issue of targets raised a whole new set of questions. So far, only 3 people had been killed, ATF agents, but still... The idea was to show the American public how inept the government was at dealing with terrorists and maybe one of those reporters would pick up on the fact that Dubya and his minions were behind some of the things going on around the US of A. By the way, ANNM is classified as a high order explosive, but the key factor was its brisance, whatever that was and it was hygroscopic, which meant it absorbed moisture from the air. But, since the primary intent was disruption, maybe bridges, or highway overpasses would be more suitable targets.

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20Jul06...

"So, we don't get to blow up any more buildings?" Ron asked.

"Nope," Gary replied, "We're going for targets that will make the government look bad and inconvenience people, but not hurt anyone. I guess I just lost sight of the objective for a moment."

"How are we going to do that?" Clarence asked.

"We'll get a tractor-trailer load of commercial explosives and fake a set of delivery invoices and bills of lading," Gary said. "We can actually rent a Ryder truck to carry the detcord, and other things. We'll pack it with some household goods and put Jim and Becky in the cab under the pretense they're moving. Maybe they can even tow that old Toyota and make it more believable."

"I'm with you so far," Ron nodded, "But what are we going to hit?"

"I was thinking about the icons, but decided that would PO too many people," Gary said, "So it has to be something that will take a long time to fix and that we can time it so nobody gets hurt."

"What are icons?" Clarence asked.

“That what the National Park Service calls the Monuments and things like the Statute of Liberty,” Gary said.

“So what are we going for instead?” Ron repeated.

“Interstate bridges and overpasses, things like that,” Gary explained.

“And just how do you propose to do all of this?” Clarence asked.

“We’ll transport everything to the east coast and work our way home, zigzag fashion,” Gary said.

“Why the change in plans?” Clarence asked.

“It not so much a change in plans as Derek reminding me what this was all about,” Gary said. “He was right, too. Anyway, is it a go?”

“What about the Militia?” Ron asked. “We got all those guns and ¼ million rounds of ammo and it just seems like such a waste.”

“Ron, back when we were kids, some guy named LeBlanc promoted a patent medicine called Hadacol,” Gary explained. “It was just a little honey, a little of this and that, and a stiff shot of alcohol hyped up with vitamin B. Anyway, the guy was brilliant at marketing. It gave me an idea. We can buy some new semi-trailers and paint them up like Coca-Cola delivery trucks. No one will give them a second look. We can outfit the insides of the trailers as rolling motels, etc. Every time the Militia comes up against some of those ATF agents or FEMA folks, we’ll take them out.”

“Now you’re talking partner,” Ron said.

Before it was all said and done, they ditched the Ryder truck idea and decided to just have a fleet of Coca-Cola trucks. Everyone would think it was some ad campaign by Coke and Coke would probably not object since they were getting free advertising. They bought a fleet of tractors and trailers and implemented the plan. Roy and his little group of scavengers collected the explosives and they fixed up the trailers with bunks, toilets, showers, etc. Heck, they even put in false door that were stacked with 12-packs of Coke just to complete the illusion.

03Sep06...0530...

The fleet of semis was parked on I-278 on Staten Island, pointed west. They were just past the Verrazano Narrows Bridge. During the night, they had wired the bridge to drop 2 sections. Everything was on a timer set to go off at Midnight at the end of the Labor Day holiday tomorrow. They divided up and headed for the other 3 bridges serving Staten Island. If all went well, they would be in Wilmington, Delaware before the explosions even went off. They were going to take I-95, pick up I-10, drive west to I-65 and

wind their way north, leaving a wake of destruction behind them. It had occurred to someone that this Coca-Cola idea was pretty good, but sooner or later someone would put 2 and 2 together and start stopping Coke trucks. So, they brought a couple of compressors, paint sprayers and all sorts of decals to alter the appearance of the trailers and semis.

It had taken a while to get everything just right, and hadn't been cheap, but they even had a command trailer for Gary, Ron and Clarence. And, since a plan, no matter how good, never survives first contact with the enemy, Gary had brought along some of that gold to oil the squeaking wheels. The economy was in the toilet, Bush was up to his hind end in reptilians, and all it was going to take was a little shove to set things right.

05Sep06...

My Fellow Americans,

The terrorists have stuck yet again. Secretary Ridge assures me that the Department of Homeland Security is on top of this situation and the FBI expects to make arrests at any moment. Fortunately no lives were lost in the explosions that destroyed the 4 bridges connecting Staten Island to Long Island, and New Jersey. This is yet another example of the string of terrorist activities that began with the hijacking of the 747 earlier this year. To date, these terrorists have hijacked a 747, which, regrettably, I had to order shot down, exploded a series of bombs on the Mall causing massive loss of life and injuries, destroyed two federal buildings, one in Los Angeles and one in Salt Lake and caused a massive anhydrous ammonia spill in Seattle.

Laura and I pray for all the people who will be inconvenienced by using the Staten Island Ferry. This will not be allowed to continue, you have my personal assurance on that.

The CIA has assured me that Muslim Extremists are behind these actions. As a consequence, I will appear before Congress seeking permission to seek out and destroy the Muslim Extremists in their very homes. Our military is much stronger now and we boast a 15 Division Army. I will do whatever it takes to bring an end to this senseless destruction of the American infrastructure.

Regrettably, to pay for the additional costs of these actions, I am being forced to ask Congress to repeal all of the tax cuts I sponsored during my first term in office, with one exception. The capital gains law will be lowered to 14%. In addition, we will be forced to double the fees at all National Parks and Monuments. I also intend to ask Congress to impose an additional, temporary, 10% surcharge on the price of gasoline."

This terror must stop. We will see that it does. I thank you.

God Bless America.

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“George is starting to sound like a Democrat,” Ron laughed. “Even Kerry didn’t want to go that far.”

“Did you notice how he rolled up all of the attacks into one package and blamed them all on al Qaeda?” Gary asked. “And that crap about making arrests at any moment?”

“What did you expect him to say Gary?” Clarence asked. “I had the CIA hijack the airliner just so I could create an incident and I had the CIA blow up the Mall so I had an excuse to start another war?”

“What do you think Marshal Marshall?” Gary asked.

“I think that Marshal or Marshall would be enough,” Marshall said, “I don’t know if you’re talking to me or my badge.”

“Can you get me one of those badges?” Ron asked, “They’re kind of neat.”

They were now in Virginia Beach, Virginia, just a few miles from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. The bridge was a marvel of engineering and had two spans that ran across the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The bridge was now well guarded, but they were going to take a boat out into the Bay and knock down four support pillars. It wouldn’t bring the country to its knees, but it would most certainly make a statement.

Bush didn’t even bother to go on TV after the Chesapeake Bay Bridge fell. The word was that Congress had no intention of approving any new War Against Terror and it appeared that his proposed tax increases wouldn’t fly either. The House was calling for Tom Ridge’s resignation. And, the Senate had voted to investigate the rash of attacks, right after he’d given his last speech.

“What next partner?” Ron asked.

“Well, there’s this nice bridge going across Lake Marion,” Gary said. “And, there’s a bridge across the Chattahoochee River on US 82.”

“We keep doing bridges, they’re going to catch us,” Clarence argued.

“Alright, we’ll do these two and then you can pick the target Clarence, do you have anything in mind?” Gary asked.

“I got throwed in jail once down in New Orleans,” Clarence said, “Drunk and disorderly. Anyway, there’s this Lake Point Chartrain Causeway.”

“Clarence, that’s just another bridge,” Ron said.

“But it’s different Ron,” Clarence said, “That jail was a terrible place and those boys down in New Orleans were purely mean.”

“When did this all happen Clarence?” Gary asked.

“1963,” Clarence replied.

“The folks down in New Orleans might have changed a bit since 1963 Clarence,” Gary suggested.

“I don’t care, you said I got to pick the next target,” Clarence insisted.

“Ron, do you like Cajun food?” Gary asked.

Preparations – Chapter 51 – All that Jazz

“Do you mean like Jambalaya, Crawfish Pie, File Gumbo and Macheramio?” Ron asked.

“Ron that’s ma cher amio and I think Roy Orbison was trying to say something like my dear friend in Cajun,” Gary explained.

“Whatever,” Ron said. “No.”

“No, what?” Gary asked.

“I don’t like Cajun food, it isn’t spicy enough” Ron said.”

Two bridges later found the trucks repainted in a variety of schemes, no two alike, and our friends at Antoine’s in New Orleans. They hadn’t attacked the causeway, yet.

“Why did we come here?” Ron asked.

“In 1953, my Mom and Dad ate here,” Gary explained.

“Food any good?” Ron asked.

“It was in 1953, according to them, but they may have changed the menu in the last 53 years,” Gary suggested.

“I want a poboy,” Clarence said.

“This menu is in French,” Ron said, “Anyone speak French?”

“Enough to know that we’re in the wrong place,” Gary said. “Clarence, there’s no poboy on the menu. And coffee is \$2.75 a cup. Milk is \$.50 extra. And they have an \$11.00 minimum per person.”

“I knowed you should have let me pick the restaurant,” Clarence said.

Clarence had them there. They found about 30 restaurants in a 10-block radius that sold poboy’s and they were from \$5 - \$10. You could afford to drink the coffee, too if you called that stuff coffee.

“By the way Clarence,” Gary observed, “I was looking at the signs and it’s Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, not Lake Point Chartrain Causeway. Anyway, it might be a little risky, do you have another idea?”

“Well, if I can get a poboy to go, I guess we could just blow up the bridges across the Mississippi,” Clarence said.

My Fellow Americans,

Tonight I am making an appeal directly to the Muslim Terrorists. Your campaign against the American infrastructure has been successful to this point. At this moment, federal agents are wise to your mode of travel and we are making arrests. Surrender now and avoid further bloodshed. If you do, I personally assure you that you will be allowed to speak with an attorney. Otherwise, under the provisions of the new Patriot Act, you will be held for questioning at our Camp Delta in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for an extended period and fed nothing but BLT's and roast pork.

Laura and I send our prayers to the residents of New Orleans.

God Bless America.

"Let's surrender," Clarence said, "I like roast pork."

"Do you speak Arabic or Farsi Clarence?" Ron asked.

"No," Clarence reluctantly admitted.

"Here, I bought you an extra poboy," Ron said, "Gar-Bear, let's go blow up some more bridges."

"I'm bored," Gary responded, "Let's just go back to Palmdale. We haven't gotten to shoot a single fed either."

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09Oct06...Moon Shadows...0900...

"Good morning Gary," Clarence smiled.

"Morning partner," Ron half agreed.

"Good morning," Gary said, "What's up?"

"Gold," Ron said "\$1,625 an ounce." (Gary was down to 90 ingots, \$58,500,000.)

"No, I mean what's new?" Gary said.

"SSDD," Ron announced.

"Then why is the compound being watched?" Gary asked.

"What?" Ron said.

“Derek spotted the guy yesterday afternoon,” Gary explained.

“How many people are there?” Clarence asked.

“Just one, so far,” Gary replied.

“Why don’t we take the guy out?” Ron asked.

“Ron, get real,” Gary groaned, “Say it’s the government and we take their guy out. In case you don’t remember, Dubya has a whole lot of fighters and bombers and tanks and crap. He could turn this whole compound into a pile of rubble in about 2 minutes flat.”

“What are we going to do Gary?” Clarence asked.

“I’ve got the militia on alert,” Gary explained. “They’re putting up a cyclone fence around the propane tanks and stringing the barbed wire.”

“What’s the cyclone fence for?” Ron asked.

“I got the idea from a friend of mine. You put a ring of fencing around the tanks to intercept RPG’s, AT-4s and the like. They’re going to do the water tower too.”

“How far out?” Ron asked.

“I couldn’t remember, but I figured 30’ would do, so 30’,” Gary replied.

“Well, Gary,” Clarence said, “We might just as well bend over and kiss our butts good-bye.”

“Look guys,” Gary reflected, “They can’t be too overt about what they do. I figured those Freedom Medals weren’t worth the tin they were made out of, but I realized that we’re sort of heroes or something and what we need to do is draw a lot of attention to ourselves. Why don’t we invite CNN and FOX News and all those folks to see what we’ve done with the compound to prepare for natural disasters and the like? And, of course to protect ourselves against those Muslim Terrorists who’ve been around blowing up the bridges.”

“But,” Clarence said, “We’re the Muslim Terrorists who’ve been blowing up the bridges.”

“You know that and I know that, but they don’t know that,” Gary suggested. “We get out the .22 rifles and long barrel shotguns and complain that we can’t really defend ourselves because of the Assault Weapons Ban.”

“It might just work,” Ron agreed.

“I sure hope so,” Gary said, “It was the best I could come up with.”

The best defense is always a good offense. Ron was the charmer, so he got on the phone and started calling newspapers, radio stations and TV stations. CNN and FOX got a whiff of a possible human-interest story and they jumped on the bandwagon. The three old geezers went around and made sure the real weapons were put up and the .22's and long barreled shotguns were being prominently displayed. The militia worked as fast as possible to get the cyclone fences up and when the media showed up the next morning, they were busy string the barbed wire.

Gary, Ron and Clarence put on quite the show. They'd been forced, they said, to spend the entire \$50 million reward on taxes and just staying safe. Rewards, Gary insisted should be tax-free anyway. They went on about how they used to have M1A rifles, but with the new assault weapons ban, were forced to defend their homes against the terrorists with a few measly .22 rifles, shotguns and the venerable .45 Colt auto. They declined to let the media see the entire compound asserting that they didn't want to give the terrorists a road map on how to attack them or disclose any vulnerabilities they might have. (Derek hadn't had time to hide the tanks.) Gary suggested to one reporter, off the record of course, that they even suspected that the terrorists were watching them at this very moment. There was one of them right across the road in that field.

Now, we all know how reporters are, don't we? It didn't take the reporter more than 5 minutes to drag a camera crew to the field and 'interview' the 'terrorist'. He claimed to be an ATF agent just keeping a watch over the compound as a special favor to the President. Bush looked out for America's heroes, after all. That might have worked if he had said US Marshal or FBI, but ATF was Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms wasn't it, the reporter asked? Yes of course, the agent said. Well, were the Palmdale Militia members suspected of moon shining or bootlegging cigarettes or having too short of barrels on their shotguns the reporter asked. It was nothing of the sort the agent insisted, the FBI was just shorthanded because they were looking for those Muslim Terrorists.

That evening the FOX News reporter showed the video and suggested that the agent had been less than forthcoming. He even showed film of the water tower and said that Gary was being sued by the City of Palmdale for nothing more serious than putting in a water tank for emergencies. The media attention had the desired effect. The downside was that reporter's kept showing up for follow-up interviews. But, the news media being the news media, interest in the story began to wane. That didn't dissuade the three old geezers; they simply got Roy and a couple others to attack the compound with the Barrett rifles and called the Sheriff's Department begging for protection. By the time the Sheriff's Deputies got there, everyone was back in the compound, but Gary, Ron and Clarence made a big show of pointing out the chunks of concrete that had been knocked out of the block walls.

You cannot do things like what the group had done without leaving a few tracks. An FBI agent picked up on the fact that the boys had been in Antoine's about the same time as

the two bridges were taken out in New Orleans. That was the only link they could find, but it was enough to confirm the suspicions that the Palmdale Militia was somehow mixed up in the whole affair. When Dubya got the word, he was livid. He got with the CIA and they hatched a plot to attack the compound with a group of mercenaries, purportedly Arabs. The usual expression is what you don't know can't hurt you. That might be true, in most cases, but somehow didn't quite apply when you were referring to the Moon Shadows housing tract. Since they had been very public about their preparations, a lot of the local residents wrote them off as kooks and just stayed away from the tract. This allowed the militia and residents to dig out the real weapons and keep them handy, but just out of sight. Gary, Ron and Clarence figured they were home free, but Derek wasn't as certain and he kept the militia at yellow alert.

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The 'Muslims' opened up on the housing tract and trailer park with their Ak-47's and RPG's. There were nearly 60 of them, all paid handsomely to stage the attack. According to the intelligence they'd been given, this bunch of militiamen had been someone to reckon with at one time, but had been defanged by the AWB. It was just Ron's bad luck to get stuck with the duty that night, but he'd soldiered on. Then he caught the movement and had put out the word.

By the time the attackers were in position, so was the militia. The attackers rushed the place, thinking that their Kevlar vests would protect them. And, if the militia had used their new 10mm weapons, they might have, but the militia was equipped with their M16's and the M995 ammo that night. The M16's had a little better range than the MP5/10's and they just automatically grabbed the M16's out of habit. It was a pretty good thing that Ron's personal weapons included those 4 5.56x45 bolt-action rifles, wasn't it? At least, that's what they told CNN when they showed up.

Preparations – Chapter 52 – Larry King Live

The resulting media attention culminated in Larry King inviting the three old geezers to appear on his show during early November when he did a week in LA.

“Just so my viewers have this straight gentlemen, this is Gary Olsen on my left, Ron Green in the center and Clarence Rawlings on my right. I understand that you’ve built quite the survivalist community up there in Palmdale. Gary, you’re the individual who were responsible for the arrest of Wesley Clark, is that correct?” Larry asked.

“Yes, Larry, I went to get a hot fudge Sundae and I happened to overhear him speaking to his wife,” Gary replied.

“Did you recognize his voice immediately?” Larry asked.

“Actually no, I have short term memory problems due to diabetes and I was halfway through the Sundae before it occurred to me where I knew the voice from,” Gary explained.

“And then you spoke to a Deputy Sheriff?” Larry prompted.

“Yes Larry, I went immediately to the LA County Sheriff’s station in the Mall, but the Deputy didn’t believe me,” Gary answered, “I had to tell him to check the guy’s ID and if I was wrong he could arrest me.”

“So…” Larry continued.

“So, they arrested General Clark and his wife, Larry,” Gary said, “I asked about my reward but the Deputy put me off. Anyway, the next thing you know, a bunch of US Marshals showed up at the Moon Shadows housing tract and transported the entire Palmdale Militia to Washington. They also brought my two sons from Iowa. They gave everyone in the service the Distinguished Service Cross and Ron, Clarence, my son Damon and me the Presidential Medal of Freedom.”

“Ron, you must have been pretty proud to receive the award,” Larry switched.

“You bet,” Ron said.

“Tell me Clarence, what does it feel like to be in the company of such distinguished persons as Hank Aaron, Pearl Bailey, the Reverend Jesse Jackson and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King?” Larry asked.

It’s feels good, Larry,” Clarence said, “I didn’t know they gave it to Jesse Jackson.”

“Let’s get back to this survival community you built, can you tell me more about it Gary?” Larry asked.

“Larry, after the federal government and the state of California got done with those unreasonable taxes, I had \$25.7 million left,” Gary explained. “If figured it would be a good idea to build a permanent survival community right there in Palmdale. So, my friends, Ron and Clarence here, moved in and I bought several homes for my children.”

“So your children live at Moon Shadows too?” Larry asked.

Yes, Larry, they do,” Gary replied. “Anyway, to make a long story short, I put in some big propane tanks and generators. I bought the abandoned trailer park next to Moon Shadows and put the Palmdale Militia up at greatly reduced rentals. Then, I bought another lot between the housing tract and the trailer park and put in more generators and a larger propane tank. That’s when my troubles began. The Palmdale City Council refused to allow me a permit to erect a water tower. I had words with them and built the tower anyway. I mean what good are survival preparations without water? Anyway they sued me.”

“I understand that you had some rather choice language for the City Council, Gary,” Larry said.

“Yeah, that’s right I told them, oh, I guess I can’t say that on TV can I? Anyway, I got me a cracker jack lawyer and this thing will be in litigation when I die in 30 or 40 years.”

“After the break, we’ll learn more about these gentlemen’s interesting lives,” Larry said and went to break.

“Whew, I thought you were going to say that on the air, Gary,” Larry said. “We’ll pick up with the allegation out of the White House that you men were in New Orleans when the bridges were bombed.”

“Suits me, Larry,” Gary smiled.

“Welcome back, my guests tonight are Gary Olsen, Ron Green and Clarence Rawlings of the Palmdale Militia and the Moon Shadows survival community in Palmdale, California,” Larry announced, “Tell me Gary how did Moon Shadows get its name?”

“I don’t know, but the street I live on was named after the James Bond movie, Moonraker,” Gary replied.

“You were telling us about your survival community, Gary,” Larry said, “Let me bring up something else, there have been veiled allegations from the White House that you three were somehow mixed up in the bombing of those bridges in New Orleans, can you tell me about that?”

“Larry it goes back a lot further than that,” Gary said, “Supposedly some woman gave the government a tip that we were involved in the downing of that 747 carrying all of

those veterans. I'm a veteran myself and I'd never be involved in anything like that. Anyway, just as you folks were switching to coverage of Bush's speech, US Marshals came busting into my home, Ron's and Clarence's. They arrested us, hauled us down to Los Angeles and detained us without asking any of us a single question."

"Do I understand this right, Gary, not a single question?" Larry seemed surprised.

"Well, the Marshal, his name is Marshall Thomas and he lives at Moon Shadows now, asked me if I wanted a Coke and then wanted to argue with me over whether I could have a regular Coke or a Diet Coke," Gary explained.

"Really?" Larry responded.

"Yes. He brought me a regular Coke and then left me sitting there needing to use the facilities, if you know what I mean. It was really embarrassing. Anyway, a while later, he came in and they released us without asking a single question."

"You don't say," Larry acknowledged. "So, what does this have to do with New Orleans?"

"It's a pattern of behavior Larry, pure and simple," Gary replied. "Anyway, one day Ron, Clarence and I got to visiting about Cajun food and poboys and I mentioned that my folks had eaten at a restaurant named Antoine's in New Orleans in 1953. One thing led to another and we ended up sitting at Antoine's in New Orleans."

"I've eaten there, the food is quite impressive," Larry announced.

"Maybe for you, but the prices are outrageous, at least to me," Gary said, "And they didn't have poboys on the menu. Anyway, we left and went to another restaurant and returned to Palmdale."

"I see," Larry said, "Clarence were the poboys your idea or Ron's?"

"Mine, Larry, Ron doesn't like Cajun food, he says it's not spicy enough," Clarence replied.

"Ron is that true, it's not spicy enough for you?"

"You bet," Ron said.

"We have to take a commercial break right now, but I'll be back with Clarence, Ron and Gary, the dynamic trio from Palmdale, California," Larry announced.

"After the break, we'll pick this up with the guy in the field, ok?" Larry asked.

"Fine," Gary replied.

“Welcome back, my guests tonight are Gary Olsen, Ron Green and Clarence Rawlings of the Palmdale Militia and the Moon Shadows survival community in Palmdale, California,” Larry announced, “Gary let me get back to you. I understand that shortly after the New Orleans trip, you fellows caught someone spying on you?”

“That’s right Larry, my other son Derek saw this guy in the field,” Gary said.

“And you...” Larry prompted.

“We started taking precautions like putting up barriers around the tanks against Rocket Propelled Grenades,” Gary picked up. “We also started putting up barbed wire to protect ourselves. Anyway, somehow the news media picked up on that and the next thing you know we were flooded with reporters. What else could we do, we gave them a tour of our community.”

“And the man in the field?” Larry asked.

“Oh, well, I mentioned, off the record you understand, to some reporter that we were being spied on and you know what happened next, it was on all the news,” Gary commented.

“For those who don’t know,” Larry said, “The man in the field turned out to be an ATF agent, allegedly sent by President Bush to protect the housing tract.”

“Allegedly is right Larry,” Gary interrupted, “How do you protect a housing tract by hiding in the weeds?”

“That’s a good question Gary, but I don’t have the answer,” Larry said.

“So a few weeks later, the housing tract and the trailer park were attacked, is that right?” Larry asked.

“That’s right Larry, about 3am on the morning of October 28th, Ron was standing watch in the OP, that’s our Observation Post, and he saw some guys coming in from the field across the road. As luck would have it, Ron had 4 5.56x45 rifles in his personal collection. They’re still legal under this stupid Assault Weapons Ban you know. Anyway, Ron put out the alarm and the militia was ready for them. All we had was .22 rifles, some legal shotguns and those 4 rifles, but, we got lucky and killed them all,” Gary raved on.

“And afterwards?” Larry prompted.

“Well it turned out that they were mercenaries someone hired to murder us,” Gary said. “You know Larry, it just doesn’t make sense. Freedom Medals or not, it’s like the White House is out to get us. I have it on good authority that Wesley Clark was shot first and then shoved out that door. They accused us of hijacking that plane when we were in our

homes in Palmdale. Then we make an innocent trip to New Orleans for a poboy and some Cajun food and the ATF starts watching our housing tract. And then mercenaries attack us. I agree with President Bush, it's the same people behind all of this, but it isn't us. I'd sooner think it was the CIA, and, I have that on good authority, too."

"Ron, is that how you see it?" Larry asked.

"You bet," Ron said.

"And Clarence what do you have to say?" Larry rounded out the interview.

"Did they really give the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Jesse Jackson?" Clarence asked.

"August 9, 2000 by President Clinton," Larry replied.

"Well I'll be darned," Clarence muttered.

"Unfortunately, we've run over tonight and don't have time for viewers' calls," Larry announced. "I'd like to thank our guests, Clarence Rawlings, Ronald Green and Gary Olsen, the Palmdale Three. Gentlemen it has been a pleasure and thought provoking."

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"Gary, I swear, your nose grew 4" during that show," Clarence laughed.

"Clarence, I just told it like I see it," Gary smiled.

"More like how you want the public to see it Gar-Bear," Ron said, "You did everything but paint a target on our old friend George."

"Do you have any doubt that the man has blood on his hands, Ronald?" Gary asked.

"Not really, no," Ron replied. "Did you ever work in advertising Gar? Or as an actor? That was a pretty fine performance tonight."

"I had a good teacher Ron," Gary said, "I used to watch Wolf Blitzer."

Preparations – Chapter 53 – FOX News

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“Bill O’Reilly was talking about our appearance on Larry King Live,” Clarence said, “Did you see the show?”

“I like O’Reilly Clarence, but I can’t stand FOX News,” Gary replied. “Nope didn’t see it.”

“What you got against FOX news?” Clarence asked, “They’re better than CNN.”

“True enough buddy, but Geraldo works for FOX,” Gary explained, “You know, ‘tell them where our troops are Geraldo’.”

“But you get the bad with the good Gary,” Clarence said, “Don’t watch his show if you don’t like him. Don’t matter anyway; he’s going to stop reporting. He’s running for office.”

“Let me get this straight Clarence, Geraldo Rivera, who is a lawyer who doesn’t practice law and is a reporter who can’t keep his mouth shut is going to become a politician?”

“That’s right, why?” Clarence asked.

“Oh nothing, I just hate politicians, lawyers and reporters, that’s all,” Gary said, “And now you’re telling me I’m going to have all three rolled up in one package, right?”

“That’s right Gary,” Clarence said, “Don’t be too hard on the boy, people will think you’re prejudiced.”

“Clarence, I read an article on CNN that said, “US military officials told CNN on Monday morning that Rivera violated the cardinal rule of war reporting by giving away crucial details of military plans during a Fox News Channel broadcast from Iraq, where the reporter was temporarily assigned to the Army’s 101st Airborne Division. In the live broadcast, Rivera told his photographer to aim the camera at the sand in front of him. Rivera then outlined a map of Iraq, and showed the relative location of Baghdad and his location with the 101st Airborne. He then showed where the 101st would be going next,” Gary explained. “I don’t like the guy. I don’t care one way or the other that he’s ½ Jewish and ½ Puerto Rican. He’s got a BIG mouth.”

“When was that?” Clarence asked.

“In 2003,” Gary said, “I only have problems with my short term memory.”

“He’s going to make a public appearance in Los Angeles, want to go see him and tell him to his face?” Clarence said.

"When?" Gary asked.

"Next Monday," Clarence replied.

"Gee, I have something to do next Monday," Gary said, "But thanks for asking."

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"You should have come Gary, it was awful," Clarence said, "Now you won't get a chance to speak to Geraldo and tell him what you think of him."

"I was planning on sending an email, but I got busy," Gary said, "What do you mean I won't be able to tell him what I think of him?"

"You haven't heard?" Clarence asked.

"Heard what?" Gary asked back.

"Somebody shot him," Clarence explained.

"Really?" Gary said, "That's a real shame, Clarence. I guess I won't send him that email after all. What, some disgruntled fan walk up and put one in his gut?"

"No, someone shot him with a high powered silenced rifle," Clarence added. "They said on the radio the shot was from 500 yards away."

"I'm real sorry about that Clarence, I know how much you admired the guy," Gary said.

"Where did you get the idea I admired the guy?" Clarence asked.

"Last week you said..." Gary started to say.

"That people will think you're prejudiced," Clarence said. "I didn't say I liked the guy, he was a real show off."

"Well, anyway," Gary said, "Sorry you had to see it. Did they catch they guy?"

"No, he made a clean getaway," Clarence replied.

"But they got a description, right?" Gary said.

"Afraid not Gary," Clarence said. "They said that the police are completely stumped."

"Geraldo once said that people either liked him or didn't like him, Clarence, "I guess someone just got tired of him shooting off his mouth. I wish I'd been there."

“I be talking to you later Gary,” Clarence said.”

“Take care buddy,” Gary acknowledged.

“600 yards,” Gary thought.

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Apparently a Democratic member of Congress caught the Larry King Live performance. The director of the CIA’s name was added to the witness list. The Senator who wanted the name on the list was Senator John Kerry.

“Mr. Director, welcome, I have only a few questions,” Kerry said. “President Bush has said that the same group was behind the hijacking of the 747, the explosions on the Mall, the attacks on the federal buildings, the attack in Seattle and the attacks on the bridges around our nation, do you concur in that assessment?”

“I have no knowledge to the contrary Senator,” the Director replied.

“And that group is a Muslim Terrorist group, is that not so?” Kerry asked.

“I have no knowledge to the contrary Senator,” the Director replied.

“It has been suggested that this same group of Muslim Extremists is responsible for the attack on that housing tract in Palmdale, California, Mr. Director,” Kerry continued, “Do you have any knowledge to the contrary?”

“No, Senator, I do not,” the Directory replied.

“Mr. Director, was the CIA responsible for those bridge bombings?” Kerry asked.

“No sir,” the DCI insisted.

“But you do agree with President Bush that the same people were behind all of the events, is that no so?” Kerry back traced.

“That’s what I testified to Senator,” the DCI replied.

“It has also been alleged that the Muslim Terrorists who made the Palmdale attack were mercenaries, is that not so?” Kerry continued.

“I’ve heard those reports Senator, yes,” the Director replied.

“Certain parties have alleged that those mercenaries were employed by the CIA, Mr. Director. Do you have any knowledge to the contrary?”

“No, Senator, I do not,” the Directory replied.

“Hypothetically, Mr. Director, would you be able to run such an operation on your own?” Senator Kerry asked.

“No Senator, hypothetically, if such an operation had been run by the CIA, it would have had to have been authorized,” the Director replied.

“By whom?” Kerry asked.

“By the only person with such authority, Senator,” the Director replied, seeing where this was going.”

“And who, Mr. Director, would have such authority?” Kerry asked.

“The President of the United States, Senator,” the Director replied, “If such an order had been given.”

“I see. Mr. Director, are you familiar with the Tom Clancy movie, “Clear and Present Danger?”

“Of course, Senator, it was a good film,” the Director replied.

“But that was only a movie, not real life, correct?” Kerry commented.

“Correct Senator,” the Director answered.

“Thank you Mr. Director, I have no further questions,” Senator Kerry responded.

The Senator had done what he had set out to do. By mixing the real and hypothetical, he had planted a thought in the minds of the viewers. Kerry thought that the old men’s presence in New Orleans was an odd coincidence. Kerry didn’t know who was behind any of the events and didn’t care, but IF he assumed the men had something to do with the bridges, well now, he had an opening.

The reference to the movie was to the Ritter character, who had explained to Jack how to answer questions posed by an inquiry by the Senate or House. Kerry had not alleged that Bush was behind anything, but he had shown that only Bush could have given the order. If Kerry had been half that clever in 2004, Edwards and he would have won the election. He was looking good for 2008, however. The questioning of the DCI was considered sufficiently newsworthy to warrant live coverage by cable news.

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“Did they just say we did the whole thing?” Clarence asked Ron and Gary.

"I'm not sure Clarence," Ron said, "But no, I don't think so."

"In my opinion, Clarence, Kerry just did us a big favor," Gary suggested. "He got that DCI to say two times that the same group was responsible for everything. We didn't hijack that 747 or bomb the Mall. We certainly didn't attack ourselves or hire someone to do it. Ergo, we didn't bomb the bridges."

An ear-to-ear grin began to spread on Clarence face. "That's right Gary, we didn't blow up those bridges, did we?" Clarence announced.

"You are the most underhanded, conniving SOB I've ever known Gary Olsen," Ron laughed, "Let me shake your hand."

"I may have to vote for Kerry/Edwards in 2008," Gary said, "At least he's against the USA Patriot Act II."

Back in Washington, the new DCI was worried. He'd only gotten the job because the Senate had pressed Bush to hurry up and replace George Tenet. And if the CIA was involved in this mess, it was only because the President bypassed him in the chain-of-command and worked directly with some of the old Bush cronies in the Agency.

Well, he'd been looking for a job when he gotten this one, so what the hell. On the other hand, if the Agency were involved, he had a good idea who within the Agency was responsible. Maybe he could get on Kerry's good side and pick up an unlikely supporter. Kerry had toned down some of his rhetoric since he'd been appointed to fill Kennedy's vacant position. Yes sir, he was going to give this some serious thought.

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The LAPD's investigation into the assassination of Geraldo Rivera was going nowhere fast. They had determined that the killer had escaped because they had gotten the distance wrong and had been looking in the wrong place. The distance was 600 yards, not 500 yards, as they had originally believed. And they sort of had an eyewitness. One of the under the bridge gang was claiming that he'd seen a crippled old man lugging a huge rifle to the spot where they now presumed that the shot had come from.

But, the description the drunk gave was, at best, vague. A short, elderly cripple wearing faded denims, a golf shirt and a cowboy hat with a Band-Aid was all the drunk could remember. The guy had walked like his feet hurt, according to the drunk. And he drove an old, non-descript Toyota that the drunk hadn't gotten the license plate number of. Do you have any idea how many old, non-descript Toyotas there are in southern California? Or, how many seniors made California their home because of the weather?

Then a drive by shooting occurred in south central and the detective was assigned to handle that case. The LAPD was perennially short staffed and the Geraldo murder case got shoved to the bottom of the stack. If he couldn't solve the murder case, it was no big

deal; they'd probably put it on TV on A & E's American Justice or on CBS's Cold Case. His pet theory was that some skinhead who didn't like Puerto Ricans or Jews or both had dressed himself up as an old man and left a trail of false clues. A grungy cowboy hat with a Band-Aid on it? Yeah, right, it was obviously a false clue.

Preparations – Chapter 54 – Good News/Bad News

The attorney called to advise Gary that the City of Palmdale was dropping its lawsuit over the water tower. That was good news. The attorney's fees were more than the water tower had cost. That was the bad news. Gold was now \$1,685 an ounce (\$60,660,000), so it didn't matter, one way or the other.

Question:

I recently took a Flag Etiquette Quiz at another site. One of the questions concerned proper disposal of the American flag. The question was "How should you dispose of a US flag that's beyond repair?"

Options were 1) Burn it 2) Shred it 3) Give it to your local government or American Legion Post to dispose of

The quiz gave the correct answer as "You should give a flag that's beyond repair to your local government or American Legion Post to dispose of." But my local government would not accept our old flag. What should I do to dispose of an old flag?

USA Flag Site Answer:

Their answer came from an incorrect interpretation of this sentence at the Federal Citizen Information Center of the US General Services Administration (the GSA):

"American Legion Posts and local governments often have facilities to dispose of unserviceable flags."

While that statement is true, it's also true that they often have neither the facilities nor the knowledge. Furthermore, many municipalities have contacted USA Flag Site for what they should do with unserviceable flags. The only definitive answer is found in the US Flag Code. TITLE 4 > CHAPTER 1 > Sec. 8(k). It states:

"The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning"

There is a lot of difference between a soiled US flag and a grungy old straw hat, but Gary felt that the hat was as deserving as the Flag. He laid it in the charcoal grill and touched a match to it. He almost got burned in the process; the old hat was so full of grease, it flared quickly, taking him by surprise. When the fire burned out, Gary got a cup of coffee and headed to Ron's. They needed to talk about that Senate Intelligence Committee report. The report had, as usual, raised more questions than it had answered.

"Morning Gar," Ron said, "What's new?"

“Not much, Ron, I wanted to ask what you thought of the Senate Intelligence Committee report,” Gary replied.

“What are you so down about?” Ron asked, “Forget to take your Zoloft, again?”

“No, an old friend died,” Gary said, “That’s all.”

“I think that we’re in the clear here, Gar-Bear,” Ron returned to the subject of the report. “They didn’t arrive at any conclusions about who was responsible for the wave of attacks, but they did conclude that the same bunch was responsible for everything.”

“And since we are in the clear on the 747 thing and the Mall bombing, we out of the loop, huh?” Gary surmised.

“I think so, yes,” Ron agreed.

“Good, maybe we should go out and stir up a little more hate and discontent,” Gary suggested.

“Do you have anything particular in mind, Gar?” Ron asked.

“Not really, no,” Gary answered. “Do you have any ideas?”

“I’ll think on it some,” Ron said.

“I had some good news-bad news today,” Gary observed.

“Oh?” Ron asked.

“The City dropped the lawsuit, but the lawyer cost me more than the water tower,” Gary said.

“I see what you mean,” Ron said. “Hey why don’t we get Clarence and go riding?”

“Ok,” Gary agreed, “You know Ron; I think that Clarence pulled a fast one, that horse is gentle and won’t answer to the name Salina.”

“Cheer up partner,” Ron said, “Go get your new straw hat and your cowboy guns and we’ll get some fresh air.”

“I’m in the mood to wear my Black hat from now on,” Gary said, “Only the good guys wear white hats.”

“We aren’t the good guys?” Ron asked.

“It’s more like we didn’t get caught, at a lot of things,” Gary observed.

“I wonder what he means by that.” Ron thought.

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“Clarence, was this horse really named Salina?” Gary asked.

“That horse didn’t have no name, Gary,” Clarence admitted, “So I gave it one. I guess you could say that that horse’s name has been Salina for as long as it’s had a name.”

“Why do we have an armed escort Ron?” Gary asked, noticing 4 of the Palmdale Militia trailing behind in a Hummer.

“Radio chatter, Gar-Bear,” Ron replied.

“What radio chatter?” Gary perked up.

“A lot of people are unhappy with USA PA II,” Ron said.

“We all are Ron, but it could be worse, they could have banned semi-auto’s,” Gary said.

“That’s just the AWB part of USA PA II,” Ron replied, “No, I’m talking about the whole USA PA II and the original USA Patriot Act thing.”

“What’s it mean Ron?” Clarence asked.

“I’m not completely sure Clarence, but one of the guys on the radio sounded a lot like Manny,” Ron observed.

“You think the Pep Boys are involved?” Gary suggested.

“I said sounded like, Gar-Bear,” Ron answered, “Who knows?”

“Clarence, Salina was a mare,” Gary said.

“Yeah, so?” Clarence responded.

“This horse is a gelding,” Gary pointed out.

“Really? How do you tell?” Clarence asked.

“Maybe we ought to give the Pep Boys a call, Ron,” Gary urged.

“No phone calls, but a visit might be in order,” Ron agreed.

“We’re in pretty good shape as a community, right?” Gary asked.

"I figure we could go for quite a while, even if they cut the utilities," Ron said. "You know, 220,000 gallons of propane will go a long ways, even in the winter."

"I was thinking we could recapture the heat those generators produce Ron," Gary said.

"You sort of went crazy on those generators there Gar-Bear," Ron observed.

"I know Ronald," Gary said, "But it's better to have them and not need them than to need them and not have them, right?"

"True," Ron said.

"And as long as I'm on my soapbox, there's another thing, Ron." Gary continued. "We should have connected all of the propane tanks instead of the gasifier output lines."

"When you're right, you're right Gar-Bear," Ron acknowledged.

"So, let's make it happen partner," Gary suggested. "Can you arrange all of that?"

"No problem pal," Ron said.

"Clarence," Gary said.

"What?" Clarence replied.

"The difference between a gelding and a mare is ..."

It was a snap to re-plumb the propane and Cummins Power put Ron onto the heat exchanger people. They connected the heated water to the hot water heaters, eliminating most of their hot water heater gas usage, when the generators were running. The Pep Boys agreed to meet with Ron, Clarence and Gary, but they didn't go into any specifics. They were from the 'old school' and didn't believe in getting outsiders involved in their internal affairs. And as far as they were concerned the Palmdale Militia was an outsider because they were just too public sometimes. The very idea of going on Larry King Live was ridiculous. Those Palmdale boys put all their business on the street. Besides, the Pep Boys hadn't gotten any Presidential Freedom Awards or Distinguished Service Crosses.

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Manny, Moe and Jack had their own agenda and it didn't include the folks from Palmdale. They had enough of Bush and his crap and they were going to stir up things a little on their own.

Tuesday, 02Jan07...

As was his usual habit, Gary stumbled to the kitchen, got his coffee and headed to the office for a smoke. He logged into the network and went surfing to see what CNN had to say. They still used the red banner when they had breaking news and this time it said something about an attack in Los Angeles. That probably meant he'd have to wait 15 minutes to know what it was about so he clicked on 1stheadlines dot com to avoid the wait.

The attack was still in progress, but he clicked on a link to LA Attack and learned that the small remaining group of FEMA folks trying to coordinate the finishing touches on the rebuilding were under attack from an unknown group at their HQ in downtown. Gary answered an urgent call of nature and went back to the computer. He tried CNN again and they had a story posted. It turned out to be the story he'd read on the headlines link, word for word and he still didn't know anything. Gary splashed some water on his face, pulled on his faded denims and golf shirt and headed for Ron's. Ron was sitting in his bathrobe at his computer looking at the same story on CNN.

Ron peered at Gary through his bloodshot eyes and asked, "Did you see this Gar-Bear?"

"That's what brought me down here in the middle of the night," Gary said. (It was only 9:30 am)

"You don't suppose it's those yahoos from Lancaster do you?" Ron asked.

"Probably, Ronald," Gary mumbled. "Call the White House."

"What?" Ron said, "Why?"

"Because they'll trace the call and know we aren't involved," Gary said.

"If you wouldn't have hired all of the Militia to work for you, we wouldn't have to prove it wasn't us," Ron complained. "Hello? This is Ron Green and I want to talk to George... Really??? Well you tell him that the three old geezers from Palmdale are on the phone and we ain't got nothing to do with that trouble in LA... What do you mean write him a letter??? Forget it Lady. Well, Gar-Bear, she said we had to write him a letter."

"Yeah, I heard," Gary said. "So write him a letter and tell him he's uglier than you," Gary suggested.

"I can't do that, he's the fricking President and he's already mad at us," Ron complained.

"Yeah, but the email will have a timestamp on it Ron, and just say that in your opinion he's uglier than you. Everyone is allowed an opinion, so what can he do?" Gary smirked.

“I’ll go put in my other eye so I can type,” Ron said.

“But it’s glass, how does that help you to type?” Gary asked.

“It gives me a balanced outlook on life,” Ron cracked.

“That’s probably the eye you were using when you ran the lawn mower over your foot and cut your toe off,” Gary laughed.

“It was not,” Ron protested, “It’s like I’ve told you 100 times, I cut my toe off when I was mowing the lawn at 3am because I was drunk and it was too dark to see.”

Preparations – Chapter 55 – Reflections

“And I still don’t believe you Ron,” Gary said.

“You write him, and then he’ll know it’s a lie,” Ron said.

“I think we’d better batten down the hatches,” Gary said, “Bush will probably send federal troops into LA.”

“But we didn’t do anything Gar-Bear,” Ron protested.

“Not yet, no, my friend, not yet,” Gary remarked.

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Gary left so that Ron could clean up and get dressed. There really wasn’t a lot wrong with the country, per se. The economy was in the toilet and it looked to be a while before it straightened out. At least the price of gold had seemed to stabilize at \$1,685. He thought about converting the gold into a stable currency, but ‘stable currency’ was another of those oxymoron’s. FDR had not so much gotten the US out of the Great Depression as had WW II. The economy is so difficult to control and usually when the government tried to do something; it took so long and sometimes didn’t work. Gerald Ford got it right, but Jimmy Carter got it wrong. Then Reagan had it right, for a while. Clinton took credit for a good economy during his administration, but if it were so good, why did Dubya have to cut taxes to stimulate the economy when he took office? That gold down in the basement would go down in value as the economy improved, just like always.

As far as laws went, the USA Patriot Act I & II were mistakes as was the AWB. It just seemed like criminals had too many rights and victims too few. But when you thought about it what had brought that about? The first major criminal rights case was not Miranda, but Gideon followed by Escobedo. Gary bet that many people didn’t know that. One led to another and finally Miranda. And, California was about the worst of the states; there were probably more lawyers than cops in California. And everyone seemed to want to sue everyone else. That’s what happened when the growth of lawyers, per capita, outstripped the per capita death of lawyers.

Maybe those boys up in Lancaster had it right; maybe it was time to bring the feds back down to size. But how were they going to do it? That thing back in ‘05 had been a fluke. A dozen sniper teams started the ball rolling and the Pep Boys kept it rolling, but it was the Air Force and Army who had wrapped it up. If they did start something, what would the new, larger Army do? It wasn’t like it was another coup; George W. Bush was the duly elected President. Still, the idea of waiting 2 more years until a new President took office was unacceptable. And once the guy was in, what would he or she do, more of the same? The time to send a message is before the bombs start falling, ask those guys at Pearl Harbor. Then, when they got a new President, he or she would have the message, maybe.

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The attack in LA had been the Pep Boys after all. The FEMA people weren't expecting any trouble and hadn't been ready for an attack. The Pep Boys just mowed them down and hadn't even stayed around long enough to make sure the feds were all dead. Gary figured Ron was around by now, so he filled his coffee cup and headed back to discuss a few things with his friend.

"It was the Pep Boys, Ron. You were right," Gary said. "I've been sitting down there thinking about a lot of things. It just feels like we need to do something, but I'm not sure what."

"We're a little old to do it ourselves Gary," Ron noted, "Is it right to get those young people involved in something?"

"We are older partner, but if those young people don't do it, what are they going to end up with?" Gary asked. "Part of the problem with the current generation is that they're spoiled and we've given them everything on a silver platter. That is what's wrong with Kevin and that is what's wrong with Amy. The only difference between the two of them is that Amy is trying to get ahead by going to school. But, they both expect us to take care of them."

"With Kevin, it's more than half Gar, but I know what you mean," Ron said. "So it's fair to get them involved, but involved in what?"

"Think back to '05 Ron, we didn't have a pot to pee in or a window to throw it out of," Gary said. "Since we have everything we could possibly use including two tanks and 4 armed Hummers, we could do any awfully good job of covering the Pep Boys' back, if nothing else."

"Those two tanks aren't anything but bookends Gar-Bear," Ron said, "The minute you take them out from under that camo netting, the other guy starts playing by a different set of rules. Wasn't it you who talked about fighters and bombers and tanks and how they had more than we do?"

"That probably applies for the M-2 and Mk-19's Ron," Gary agreed, "I guess we're just going to have to limit ourselves. But we do have the M203s and the Thumpers, so we aren't empty handed."

"Don't forget those Claymores, Gar," Ron reminded him, "They're one nasty piece of work. But I disagree with you on the M-2 and Mk-19's. The Barrett's use the same ammo as the M-2 and a 40mm grenade is a 40mm grenade."

"You didn't comment on my statement about following the Pep Boys around and covering their backs Ron," Gary said, "Do you disagree with me on that too?"

“Yes, they’re nice guys, I suppose, but they are undisciplined,” Ron explained. “Our people are just the opposite. By the way, those MP5/10’s are the SD6 model, were you aware of that?”

“No I wasn’t,” Gary said, “Someone asked me and I said they didn’t have suppressors.”

“Suppressors and the semi-auto/3-round burst/full auto trigger group,” Ron said. “Those 10mm pistols are a handful, though.”

“With my hands like they are, I’m just going to stick with my Super Match and PT1911,” Gary remarked, “Assuming we see any action.”

“Funny, I thought you had gotten partial to the .50 caliber,” Ron said with ‘that look’.

“600 yards,” Gary said. “Best shot I ever made.”

“You admit it then?” Ron asked.

“Admit what?” Gary replied, “I only admit that the best shot I ever made was a 600-yard shot.”

“Never mind. You know we’ve always been motivated by defending ourselves, where does that fit into this discussion? And don’t cop out by saying the best defense is a good offense.”

“It is and that’s been our approach in the past,” Gary pointed out. “And it worked, too. That little attack we staged with Roy and the others firing on the compound proved the block wall isn’t any protection. The .30 caliber slugs penetrated the wall and the .50 caliber rounds knocked out sections of block. That block wall might be good to hide behind, but it’s no protection. We have to keep the fighting away from this compound Ronald.”

“What’s gotten into you Gar-Bear?” Ron asked, confused.

“I don’t know buddy, I suppose I’ve been hiding the fact that the whole thing scares me to death by clowning around,” Gary guessed out loud. “We just got lucky when we did the bridges, you know. We guessed right on the extra weight, but what if they’d inspected the trailers? They would have caught us red-handed.”

“There’s always an element of luck in most everything you do in life Gar-Bear,” Ron said.

“True. But we can’t just sit around and hope that this country gets straightened out either buddy,” Gary said, “We’ve got to do something.”

“I seem to remember that’s where this discussion began a half hour ago,” Ron said,

“What do you propose to do?”

“As fragile as the country is at the moment, it wouldn’t take much for people like the Pep Boys to stage a full scale revolution,” Gary commented, “All they need is an excuse, so why don’t we give them an excuse?”

“Like what?” Ron asked.

“Like let’s take the power down ourselves,” Gary said, “Only this time, let’s do more than shoot out a few insulators. It would work better if the power were down for a week than for a few hours.”

“Doesn’t that just make us terrorists, plain and simple?” Ron responded.

“Terrorists strike at people and frighten them Ronald,” Gary said, “We’ve always been careful not to hurt people so I guess it makes us Freedom Fighters, not terrorists.”

“Or insurgents, like those Iraqis who were just trying to drive us out of Iraq,” Ron dryly observed. “What are we going to call ourselves, The Popular Front for the Liberation of America?”

“PFLA?” Gary made the acronym, “Why not, it has a ring to it. And old George will think we’re Muslim Extremists.”

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And thus began the 2nd American Revolution. It wasn’t about rebuilding the ship of state; it was more about scraping off the barnacles that had accumulated on the hull over the past 230 years. Even freedom has its limits. There wasn’t anything wrong with the Constitution, it was a dynamic document, but it was necessarily vague in places and it addressed the needs of a new nation being formed 230 years before.

In attempting to add specificity to that vagueness, and apply it to modern times, the courts and Congress had created some unintended consequences. Criminals didn’t have more rights than victims; both had exactly the same rights. And, that noble institution of Freedom of Speech wasn’t limitless; you couldn’t yell fire in a theater if there weren’t a fire. And was it right to try a case in the media and make movies about the case even before the trial began?

The military called unintended casualties Collateral Damage and in every conflict since the beginning of time there had been some collateral damage. Taking down the power might put some people who depended on electricity for respirators or such at risk, but not if they were prepared. I don’t know about you, but if I were on a life support system that depended upon electricity to keep me alive, I’d go without things just to make sure I had a little generator sitting in the back yard or on my balcony in case the lights went out. And, even if I were on MediCal, I’d fudge a little on my prescriptions, refilling them a

couple days early every month, and build up a little supply of critical drugs; or get some physicians samples to tide me over, just in case.

Who was to blame for the state the country was in? The big corporations exported jobs even though there was unemployment and just added to unemployment all for the sake of a couple of extra dollars on their bottom lines. And, who really cared if Martha Stewart was a crook? Fine her 10 times the amount she'd saved on that insider trading and publicize that; it made a lot more sense than spending millions to convict her of the crime. The IRS had it right; they only prosecuted cases where they were 99% sure to get convictions and they publicized the hell out of those cases. For every conviction, they publicized, they got hundreds of people voluntarily filing delinquent returns for fear of being arrested and tried. The job of the IRS was to collect revenue, not to put people in jail.

And, speaking about jails, America had been building prisons at a phenomenal rate. Why? Because the system fostered criminal behavior, starting with unemployment and welfare and an inadequate educational system. There wouldn't be any drug dealers if there weren't customers for their wares. The classless American society had three distinct classes, the rich and powerful, an indescribable middle class and the poor. Upward mobility was the American dream, but it happened to so few. Usually it was the downward mobility that was observed with every tax cut sucking more from the middle class and moving them ever closer to being poor.

Gary had a lot of gold, but he hadn't earned it, not really. He had just gone to get that Hot Fudge Sundae at Dairy Queen and happened to overhear a conversation. And, after that, he couldn't spend money as fast as he made it. Even though the gold lay stacked in a little cubicle under his home earning no interest, he'd ended up with more money than he'd started with. 90 ingots of gold at \$1,685 per ounce were worth over \$60 million.

08Jan07...

In what appears to be a repeat of the downing of electrical power lines and substations by the late General Wesley Clark, numerous transmission line towers and substations were knocked out last night by a group identifying itself as the Popular Front for the Liberation of America or PFLA. The White House has yet to offer comment. Stay tuned to CNN for further news concerning this event.

"Any trouble?" Gary asked.

"No." Derek replied, "But are you sure this is the best way to go about this?"

"Not at all Derek," Gary responded, "But we had to start somewhere and this seemed like the most innocuous approach."

"I hope that you're right Dad," Derek said.

“Me too, son. Me too,” Gary agreed.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 1 – Small Steps

“Gary, what happened to the electricity?” Clarence asked.

“Clarence, some of the boys and girls blew up some transmission line towers and electrical substations,” Gary replied.

“You mean we’re behind this?” Clarence asked, shocked.

“Yes, Clarence, we are the PFLA now,” Gary announced.

“Are you sure this is the best way to go about this?” Clarence asked.

“No Clarence, but we can’t just sit on our butts and hope everything turns out right,” Gary replied.

“Jeez Gary, this is pretty extreme,” Clarence observed, “Even for you.”

“That’s why Ron and I left you out of the decision my friend,” Gary explained, “He and I will take the fall if it doesn’t work out.”

“Ron is in on this too?” Clarence reacted. “Well hell, we’re the three old geezers to some and the Three Amigos to others, but it’s always been the three of us, so count me in. What are you going to do next?”

“Buy up a bunch of used pickups with campers and see America Clarence,” Gary replied. “It doesn’t take a lot of explosives to take down a transmission tower and there are lots of them between here and the east coast.”

“Do we have enough explosives and stuff to do that?” Clarence wanted to know.

“Not really, but there’s a lot of C-4 up at Ft. Irwin and down at 29 Palms,” Gary observed. “I think we’ll give them back their tanks and steal the C-4 and detonators instead.”

“But, sooner or later, they’ll declare martial law and start putting up roadblocks and using explosive sniffing dogs and stuff,” Clarence suggested.

“Probably, but we’ll just have to try and stay a step ahead of them,” Gary said. “Even the experts agree that there’s nothing that the cops and government can do to stop a small determined group. And, no team will know what any other team is doing, so even if a team gets caught, it won’t destroy the whole operation.”

“We’re going to run the operation from here?” Clarence asked.

“Sure why not?” Gary said. “If it’s good enough for the Muslim Extremists, it’s good

enough for the PFLA. We'll use Internet cafes or portable computers and email. That Bible code works pretty well, especially if we make each verse represent a particular unrelated message. And, we can send some teams out to dead drop the explosives ahead of time so no one will have explosives in their pickups for any longer than needed."

"You missed your calling Gary," Clarence grinned.

"No I didn't, but I can read a newspaper and a library book, pal," Gary said, "You don't have to be smart to do something like this, you just need to be able to read books, newspapers and go to the movies. And, never do things the same way twice."

Derek hated to see the tanks go, but he hadn't really wanted one in the first place. It had been one of his Dad's harebrained ideas, not his. All he'd said was that he missed his tank and the next thing you knew, his Dad had paid Roy to steal 2 of them. Not all of his Dad's ideas were harebrained, but he had his share. This latest idea all hinged on the US population blaming the government for failing to be able to maintain the peace. If there was anything about this whole scheme that would make it work; it was probably the PFLA name. People would get angry over them blowing up stuff, but they'd get even angrier with the government for being unable to stop it. At least, that was the theory.

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"How did they make out on explosives?" Gary asked.

"They almost got caught returning the tanks, but they got a fair amount of C-4 and detonators," Ron said.

"Is a fair amount enough to do the whole job?" Gary inquired.

"Roy said we'd have to have more before it was all over," Ron reported.

"Once we start this thing full time, they will be guarding those explosive dumps like nobody's business," Gary opined. "Maybe we'd better send the guys out and get everything we need before we go full throttle. They can dead drop the explosives in regional caches and it will cut down on transportation risks."

"What are we going to do if someone gets caught?" Ron asked.

"Maybe just charge in like George Armstrong Custer and rescue them; hell, I don't know, we'll play that by ear," Gary replied.

"Well sooner or later, someone is going to get suspicious of 2 guys riding around in a pickup," Ron suggested.

"I've given that a little thought, Ron, how many of the Palmdale Militia are married?"

Gary asked.

“Most of them, why?” Ron said.

“Well, a couple is less suspicious than two guys, so how about they travel as couples?” Gary suggested.

“I don’t know if the people would want their spouses involved Gar-Bear, and what about the single people?” Ron commented.

“The single people can drag along a girlfriend or boyfriend and the spouses are already up to their eyebrows in this thing,” Gary said, “They can even take the kids along, and it will just make for a better cover.”

“You have an answer for everything don’t you?” Ron retorted.

“Not hardly, but if it was me out there, Sharon would want to be along,” Gary replied.

02Mar07...

“We’re as ready as we’re ever going to be Gar-Bear,” Ron said.

“Good. Get everyone to Kansas City and have them radiate out from there,” Gary directed. “Are the pickups all equipped with Ham radios and the weapons caches and everything they need?”

“Everyone has weapons, food, radios, computers and codes,” Ron summarized, “Like I said, we’re as ready as we’re ever going to get.”

“Did you get that motor home all fixed up so we can run the operation from on the road?” Gary asked.

“Dig the wax out butthead, I said we’re ready,” Ron responded, exasperated.

“Let’s do it,” Gary said.

Since Damon was a professional truck driver, he got elected to drive the motor home and provide security for the three old geezers. They weren’t exactly helpless, they had their .50 and .30 caliber rifles, 3 MP5/10SD6’s and 3 M-79’s together with an adequate supply of munitions all safely tucked away behind false walls. Their Winchesters were locked in a gun rack, unloaded, and in plain sight. A pickup pulled a horse trailer with Salina and the other horses; it was all part of the illusion. The motor home had been outfitted with a complete communications shack, condensed into desk unit. They had even signed up for a satellite based 24/7 internet connection for the motor home and used an inertial navigation system and a computer to keep the dish pointed in the right direction at all times. Talk about elaborate!

Damon wanted to drive the motor home like a truck driver, stopping only as required by DOT rules. The three old geezers were not in any hurry, however, and this looked like a perfect time to see the sights. It took them nearly 3 weeks to get to Kansas City. By that time, everyone else had arrived in KC and spread out to do their dirty work. The covers were working perfectly. A family would pull into a campground or motel, and the militia member would take a motorcycle, recover the explosives, drop the target and return to his or her family. Then a cell phone hookup to AOL and off went the report in the double Bible code, with no one the wiser.

None of the militiamen went in anything resembling a straight line and their paths criss-crossed any number of times. No one was in a hurry and they took time to visit amusement parks and all of the usual tourist traps. For every target, they had several alternatives and when a grid section came down, it often took down other sections with it. They just putted along, taking out a target here and a target there and generally keeping the grids down. Some would be brought up for a time only to go down again.

Two groups were reacting to the crisis that the three old geezers were orchestrating, the government and militia groups all over the country. The government invoked the provisions of the USA Patriot Act I & II and sent the military all over the country, trying to protect the power lines. That was fruitless because of all of the alternative targets; and, it wasn't as if it took a large quantity of explosives to do considerable damage. Gary Ron and Clarence were having a good time, too. They were visiting all of the tourist sites in each state, essentially driving in a big circle around the Midwest.

That motor home had a lot of modifications. It had an oversized alternator and an extra battery. It had a diesel-powered generator that they could use when they were parked for an extended time. The large bed had been removed from the bedroom and a single bed substituted to make room for the extra equipment. They stayed in a 4-star motel one night and a dump the next, avoiding creating any sort of pattern. Sometimes they stayed in a location for several days and stabled the horses to let them rest or they took a day or two off themselves to rest. Gary translated the emails and marked the locations on a set of topographical maps he had on a laptop computer. And those laptops? Control-Alternate F-9 invoked a disk wiping utility that erased the files and quickly overwrote the HDD. They hadn't had to use the feature yet; it was one of those just in case things that Gary was so big on.

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"I never thought we'd pull this off partner," Ron gushed, "But man was I wrong; some of those local groups are starting to blame to the government just like you thought they would. And the White House is just plain going crazy trying to stop us."

Just as Gary had predicted several militia groups decided that now was a good time to get back at the Federal Government for perceived wrongs. One group out of Northern California decided that blowing the Federal Western Headquarters building in San Fran-

cisco sky high would be a good way to even the scales of justice. They had tons of stolen high explosives, and loaded it into a commercial delivery truck for a paper company that delivered paper once a week to the delivery entrance that was in the sub-basement one floor above the underground parking structure. It was located right next to the freight elevators so the delivery people could have access to the offices they delivered to.

Unknown to the Federal Government, one of the members of the Golden State Militia was a driver for that company, and had kept his nose clean so he could strike a blow against the Great Oppressor. On his next scheduled delivery date, he drove up to the gate, and was waved through by the rent-a-cop without even a glance at his truck. Complacency and low pay combined to cause the total destruction of the Federal Building. The driver knew it was a one-way trip, but had a relative that died at Waco, and had always wanted to get even for his death. Once he pulled up to the delivery entrance, he reached up under the dash, and pushed a button, and a ton of C-4 exploded.

The freight elevators were located adjacent to the internal skeleton of the building, and the shaped charge expanded in a hemispherical pattern, destroying 4 columns and weakening 4 more. Between the explosion and the rubble, there was nothing-identifiable left of the truck or the driver. This time there was no escape for the Federal agents in the building, since it was 10:00 on Monday morning, the normal time for director's meetings. San Francisco was the head office for the entire Western District. Not only were thousands of Federal Officers, Jack Booted Thugs, and Federal Workers killed, but also the explosion or the resulting fire destroyed every file in every office. The explosion also damaged several adjacent buildings, and people in the street were injured and killed, but the Militia had their revenge.

The reaction by the Golden State Militia hadn't been foreseen and like the Pep Boys, they had gone a little overboard, but the three old geezers took it in stride. All they had done was pulled the pin and tossed the grenade, as it were. It had exploded all by itself. No doubt there were others around the country gearing up their groups to do more of the same. The PFLA might be responsible for a very small amount of collateral damage, but they had thus far avoided injuring anyone directly. If the action by the Golden State Militia was any example of the sentiments in the US the snowball was rolling downhill and gathering both size and momentum.

"How about we make a run over to Louisville?" Clarence suggested.

"Sure, why not?" Gary said, "What's in Louisville?"

"It's the home of the Louisville Slugger, Gary," Clarence said, "But I don't suppose you know what a Louisville Slugger is, huh?"

"Of course I do," Gary joked, "It's a guy from Louisville, Kentucky who's had one too many drinks. Or maybe, it's a baseball bat."

“You’re probably right on both counts Gar-Bear,” Ron said. “Damon, point this here motor home towards Louisville, we’re going to watch a bar fight.”

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 2 – Bourbon Country

Touring the distilleries around Kentucky made a perfect cover for the three men. Well, almost perfect, none of them drank, but Damon obliged and sampled the various products. Not too much, of course, he was the designated driver, as in the only one who knew how to drive the motor home. The horses were boarded in Louisville during this detour.

15May07...

The families had finally made it to the east and west coasts. Their 2½-month odyssey over, they returned to Moon Shadows, tired, but surprisingly intact. Nothing much had changed in their absence and Chris and Matt had kept the generators serviced and running. The people who had traveled west from KC had begun arriving back a couple of weeks earlier; one or two couples at a time. Since they were all on the payroll of the Homeowners Association there were no employers to report their lengthy absence. The three old geezers arrived the 19th of May and the last couples from the east coast runs over the following week.

01Jun07...

“Did we get away with it or are the feds breathing down our necks?” Ron asked.

“Ron, we got away with it,” Clarence replied, “I never had no doubt.”

“CNN says that Bush has posted a \$25 million reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the people behind this atrocity,” Gary reported. “Maybe I should turn myself in and collect the reward.”

“Butthead,” Ron said, “You know perfectly well you are only entitled to one federal reward.”

“Come on you two, this Ron and Gary show gets a little old after a while,” Clarence said.

“Ok Clarence,” Gary agreed. “Do you agree with Clarence that we pulled it off, Ron?”

“I guess we won’t know until the FBI comes calling Gar-Bear,” Ron answered.

“The power is back on already guys,” Clarence reminded them.

“The idea never was to take the power down permanently Clarence, it was to take old Dubya down,” Gary said. “And from the looks of things that’s working well. That bombing in San Francisco started a chain reaction. I don’t know who those people were, but it sure did get the ball rolling. You know, we should keep that 10mm stuff out in plain sight.”

“Are you nuts?” Ron snapped, “Never mind, I know the answer to that question.”

“I’m serious,” Gary said, “The whole LA County Sheriff’s Department knows we stripped those bodies, so what’s the point in hiding the weapons? It’s the other stuff that we have that we should be hiding.”

“They would have picked those weapons up by now if they were going to,” Ron disagreed.

“Or, maybe they’re just giving us enough rope to hang ourselves,” Clarence suggested.

“Clarence, we did that when we picked up those MP5’s,” Gary said.

“What did you expect?” Ron asked. “You only sent 2 dozen people to take on 100.”

“We’d have been all right if they hadn’t used the handguns,” Gary said, “I guess it’s just spilt milk, but leave the 10mm stuff out and put everything else away.”

“Nothing like closing the barn door after the horse runs away,” Clarence observed.

“Oh that’s right, Clarence,” Gary observed (sarcastically), “I forgot that you were an expert on horses.”

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02Jun07...

“Gary, get your butt over to the OP,” Ron said, “We have visitors. I think it might be the feds.”

“Darn; and I said to put the 10mm stuff out in plain view,” Gary responded, “I’ll be a minute.”

“No problem, partner, I overruled you and we went back to the shotguns and .22’s,” Ron said.

“I’ll be right there,” Gary said.

Breathlessly, Gary asked, “All right, who do we have down there?”

“USMS,” Ron said, “Served papers on the Association.”

“What kind of papers?”

“I won’t know until I see them partner,” Ron said.

“Hmm, what’s a show cause order, Gary?” Ron asked reading the document.

“It’s basically contempt citation, why?” Gary asked, “Who is behind the subpoena?”

“It looks like OSHA,” Ron said. “It says here that an officer of the Association must appear and show cause why the Association should not be held in contempt of court for refusing to respond to a Subpoena Duces Tecum issued by the Occupation Safety and Health Administration concerning our concertina wall topping.”

“Man George is bringing out his big guns isn’t he,” Gary laughed.

“What does it all mean?” Ron asked, “It sounds serious.”

“OSHA wanted some information and we didn’t respond timely so they took us to court to get the information,” Gary explained. “They are probably saying that the barbed wire is a danger to the employees’ health.”

“Is it?” Ron asked.

“No, but it means hiring a lawyer and spending time in court pal,” Gary explained. “Pure harassment.”

“Are you sure? Ron asked.

“Go to the OSHA website and search for barbed wire, pal,” Gary laughed. “Some guy had an accident with a 250 gallon propane tank and the gate was locked so he had to go over a barbed wire topped fence. The fine was for the gate being locked, not for the barbed wire. OSHA just uses scare tactics, it ain’t no big deal.”

“Ok, if you say so Gar,” Ron reluctantly agreed.

“And you were right about those guns, Ron, thanks,” Gary continued. “We’d better get ready for a no knock search. Are they well hidden?”

“Heh, heh, heh, man, they couldn’t find them with gun sniffing dogs,” Ron chuckled. “You can’t even find them and you know every nook and cranny in the whole compound.”

“I’ll take that dare,” Gary smiled.

Gary got his guard dog, Missy, and started looking. He walked her around the tract as he usually did, but other than everyone having removed their grass and gone with desert landscaping using pea gravel, saw nothing that gave him a clue. Missy was exhausted from the 4-block walk so he took her home and headed to the water tower compound. Things had certainly changed here. Roy was busy stacking the concrete block over in the corner using a forklift. Gary flagged Roy down to find out what was go-

ing on.

“Roy what’s with moving everything?” Gary asked.

“Most everyone has gone to desert landscaping and Ron suggested that we clean this area up and do the same,” Roy explained.

“We didn’t have that much block when we went out on the road, did we?” Gary asked.

“No, Ron ordered more block Gary,” Roy said, “He said the fence wouldn’t stop a bullet and that we were going to double the fence and fill the space in between with concrete.”

“He did, did he?” Gary replied, “I’m going to have to have a talk with Ronald McDonald. Were you in charge of hiding the guns?”

“No Derek did that, why?” Roy wanted to know.

“Do you know where he put them?” Gary asked.

“Yeah,” Roy smiled, “But Ron said not to tell you. He said to let you find them on your own.”

Gary let Roy get back to work and went to the trailer park to have a look around. With all of the shot-up trailers gone, the park was spacious and looked nice. Several of the militia members were busy putting in desert landscaping here too, he noticed. His feet were killing him, so he headed back to the housing tract. He noticed that some of the militia people were busy removing the sod from Ron and Linda’s and Chris and Patti’s front yards.

“Ronald, what in the hell is going on?” Gary asked, storming into the OP.

“I found that subpoena in the papers they collected while we were gone Gary,” Ron replied, ignoring Gary’s demand.

“Fine, Ron, now what the hell is going on?” Gary again demanded.

“Did you find the guns?” Ron asked.

“As a matter of fact, no. What’s with all the landscaping? And Roy said you told him that we were going to change the fence,” Gary said.

“The .30 cal punched through the wall and the .50 cal blew out sections Gar-Bear, so I figured we’d put in a second wall and fill the gap with concrete,” Ron explained.

“Roy already explained that,” Gary noted, “He also said you told him not to tell me where Derek hid the guns. Are you taking over here?”

“You said, ‘don’t bother me with the small crap’, so I didn’t,” Ron replied.

“But this must be costing thousands,” Gary objected.

“More like tens of thousands, maybe even hundreds of thousands, Gar-Bear,” Ron grinned.

“Who is paying for all of this?” Gary asked.

“Why you are of course,” Ron replied, with a straight face.

“Clarence involved in this little plot too?” Gary asked.

“I do believe that you sound a little paranoid, Gar-Bear,” Ron grinned, again.

“Just because you’re paranoid doesn’t mean they’re not out to get you Ronald,” Gary repeated the tired old cliché.

“I hired an attorney to make an appearance on that show cause order,” Ron said.

“We just got it yesterday,” Gary protested. “I was going to handle that myself.”

“That’s what I was afraid of,” Ron replied. “That’s why I hired the lawyer.”

“So, where are the guns?” Gary asked.

“I don’t know. And if I did know, I wouldn’t tell you, Gar-Bear,” Ron said. “Look it wasn’t me running my mouth off on Larry King Live, or Clarence, for that matter. I just said, ‘You bet’ and Clarence acted as if he didn’t know that Jesse Jackson had been given the Medal of Freedom. You’re the one with the bullseye painted on his back, so just lay back and let us run the show for a while. What you don’t know can’t hurt us.”

“Ok, but I don’t have to like it,” Gary said, rose and left.

What Ron had said was true. Gary had intentionally made himself the target to keep everyone else in the clear. He was the one with all of the money in the basement. Doubling up the fence made a lot of sense, although he couldn’t see the benefit in switching to desert landscaping.

It didn’t occur to him that they used more water to keep the lawns alive than to flush the toilets and for cooking, drinking and bathing. Ron had topped off the propane tanks, too. Based on his calculations, Ron figured that they needed another 200,000-gallon propane tank to have propane equivalent to the water supply. He had contracted with AmeriGas to install the tank, but hadn’t mentioned it to Gary. He had also contracted to

have a septic field installed across the road, large enough to handle Moon Shadows and the trailer park at full capacity.

The field was to be buried deep, too. That way if some developer came along and built on the site, he wouldn't disturb the septic field. The government could cut them off from gas, water, sewer and garbage collection any time they decided to up the ante. And let them search for the guns, Derek and Roy assured him that they couldn't be found, period.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 3 – A Whole New Game

Ron hadn't missed the mark by much, either with regard to the new propane tank or the feds upping the ante. AmeriGas recommended a 220,000-gallon tank, effectively doubling their capacity to 440,000 gallons, because those generators collectively used a lot of propane. On Sunday, June 10th, the ATF showed up with search warrants looking for illegal firearms. They had ground searching radars, magnetometers and about every high tech gadget that existed, but they didn't find a single illegal firearm. Chalk one up for the good guys. They even strapped Gary up to a polygraph and asked him where the guns were hidden. Gary said "I don't know" and the polygraph said he was telling the truth. They should have asked him if there were any illegal guns, but you know how some of these federal employees are.

The new tank was so large that it had to be constructed in place. AmeriGas finished the tank on June 25th, the same day that the contractor finished filling in the septic field trenches. On the 26th of June, AmeriGas began to deliver the propane. It took 73 and a fraction truckloads of propane and stretched into early July before they had the tank topped off. All of the desert landscaping had been finished off, too. The tract looked more like it was in Mesa, Arizona than Palmdale, California.

04Jul07...

"It's a shame that Palmdale outlawed fireworks," Gary said, "Independence Day won't be the same without fireworks. Are you cooking again this year Ron?"

"I thought I'd let Clarence do it this year," Ron said, "So, we're having grilled chicken instead of steaks."

"Suits me, but you'd better grill one for Sharon, partner," Gary said, "She'll have a real hissy if you don't."

"We have one thawed out for her, Gar-Bear," Ron said. "Was I right about the feds?"

"We still have utilities," Gary observed.

"I was talking about the guns, butthead," Ron snapped.

"Well, yeah, I guess so, but I feel funny not knowing where the guns are," Gary said.

"They are chilling out my friend," Ron replied, telling Gary where the guns were without telling him. The 220,000-gallon propane tank was cryogenic, e.g., colder than a witch's...

"Did the attorney get that Subpoena quashed?" Gary asked.

"Just like you said pal," Ron answered. "I suppose the utilities will go next."

“How come you doubled the propane capacity?” Gary asked.

“Well, that’s what AmeriGas suggested,” Ron explained. “Matches the water supply.”

“Ron, the water supply is unlimited,” Gary said, “That’s why we have a well. If the feds drop a bomb on this place, there won’t be anything left but a hole in the ground.”

“They wouldn’t dare,” Ron exclaimed.

“Why not?” Gary asked.

“Because we’re heroes,” Ron said.

“Yeah, right,” Gary said, “Then why are the generators coming on? They’re not scheduled to cycle today.”

“Ron, we have a problem,” Roy interrupted. “They cut the utilities.”

“That’s not a problem Roy, we can go a long time on what we have,” Ron barely looked up.

“But they’ve surrounded the compound with troops,” Roy replied.

“Did you get that tunnel dug between the trailer park and the tank compound?” Ron asked.

“Sure did,” Roy said.

“Then don’t worry about it,” Ron replied, “Enjoy the picnic.”

“What tunnel?” Gary asked.

“I had Roy dig a tunnel from the tank compound to the trailer park,” Ron explained. “It also connects to the new armory. We knocked a hole in my section of the block wall to give us access to the tank compound/park.”

“I thought you were going to put in another wall and fill the gap with concrete,” Gary said.

“We start that tomorrow, but with those troops out there, I guess we’ll have to just fill it with dirt,” Ron hypothesized.

“You seem pretty laid back for someone surrounded by the US Army,” Gary observed.

“Actually, I think it’s pretty nice of old George to provide us with protection,” Ron said.

“Fill it in with dirt, huh? Where are you going to get the dirt from?” Gary asked.

“We already have a nice pile of it, but we’ll have more as the tunnel progresses,” Ron replied. “In fact, I think we may have to build those walls further apart to use up the dirt.”

“I’m confused,” Gary admitted.

“Yeah, I know, Gar-Bear,” Ron laughed, “What’s new?”

“What tunnel?” Gary insisted.

“The one we’re constructing that can’t be detected by ground penetrating radar because of scattering or clutter,” Ron replied.

“Give me the short version,” Gary said, “Please.”

“Ok, some of the guys read up on ground penetrating radar,” Ron started. “It seems that under certain conditions, the radar cannot detect tunnels. Part of it has to do with rock strata and part of it has to do with surface conditions. Anyway, the tunnel between the trailer park and the tank park can’t be detected because of strata. The tunnel that we are building out of the compound can’t be detected because we’re taking advantage of surface conditions.”

“So, you are saying that we can leave any time we want, right?” Gary summarized.

“Not until we finish the fence to dispose of the extra dirt,” Ron said.

“Where does this tunnel come out at?” Gary wanted to know.

“Remember Jan from class?” Ron asked.

“Yes, what does she have to do with it?” Gary said.

“It comes out in her basement,” Ron revealed.

“But, that’s over ½ a mile from here,” Gary protested.

“Closer to ¾ mile Gary, 1,300 yards, give or take,” Ron advised.

“You are digging a 1,300 yard tunnel to the basement of a woman who is married to an LAPD officer?” Gary shook his head. “Smooth move pal.”

“I believe that the operative term is was, not is, pal. They got divorced.”

“Oh really, I’m looking forward to seeing that hot little number again,” Gary smiled.

“She put on about 80 pounds, you know,” Ron laughed. “But she’s still pretty.”

“Oh,” Gary replied, the disappointment evident.

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17Aug07...

“The tunnel is done,” Ron announced. “And so is the fence.”

“I can’t walk $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile partner, so I’ll take your word for it,” Gary said.

Actually, you could detect the tunnel at certain places along its run, especially where it crossed under the city streets, but you would have had to know where to look. Built deeply underground, the tunnel was well within the depth range of the ground penetrating radar units, but the curbing above the tunnel tended to produce scatter. When the tunnel had been completed a week earlier, Roy and some of the militia went up to the Desert Aire Golf Course and ‘borrowed’ an electric golf cart. Shaped like an oval, the tunnel was 8’ wide at the base and 6’ high at the ceiling and was lined to prevent a collapse. They had built the second block wall 7’ in from the original block wall and the dirt had worked out almost perfectly.

“Can you ride $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile?” Ron asked.

“Ride? Sure,” Gary responded.

“Come on then,” Ron said, “And you can see your old sweetie.”

Ron led Gary to the tank park and into a ‘tool shed’. He released a latch and the workbench slid back to reveal a stairway. They descended the circular stairway about 30’ to a small room. A tunnel went directly south and another stairway descended even further. Ron pointed out that the armory was under the new propane tank at the end of the tunnel and that the tunnel to Jan’s was about halfway between the tank park and the trailer park, under the curbing. To get to it, they had to descend to the trailer park tunnel another 45’ down.

“Why all the red light bulbs?” Gary asked, “We running a cat house?”

“Night vision,” Ron replied, “Like in the movies.”

The tunnel was definitely not the place to be if you suffered from claustrophobia. It was dimly lit and gave one that closed in feeling. Gary noticed that the tunnel appeared to slope down and then back up. The ride to the room near Jan’s house took a few minutes and when they arrived, there was another staircase. Gary didn’t count the steps, but there were a lot of them. When they got to the top, Ron pulled on a panel/door and they exited the staircase through a closet into a basement.

“Jan, are you decent?” Ron called out.

“Only when I have to be Ron,” Jan replied.

“I thought that there weren’t any basements in Palmdale,” Gary said.

“We built this for Jan, Gar-Bear and put her washer and dryer down here so it looks like a laundry room,” Ron explained. “It’s only about 12’ square.”

“Gary, long time no see, how’s Kathy?” Jan asked.

“A distant and not too fond memory Jan,” Gary replied.

“I told you that you’d be sorry,” Jan said.

“You and everybody else, Jan,” Gary acknowledged. “So Ronald, now what?”

“We have a closed van in Jan’s garage, Gar,” Ron explained, “So we can go anywhere we want. I put Jan on the payroll to drive us around whenever we want.”

“Coffee?” Jan asked.

“Part of the service?” Gary asked.

“The beginning and end of the service Gary,” Jan said giving him one of ‘those looks’.

“I didn’t mean...” Gary started to say.

“Yes you did,” Jan said, “Ron’s told me all about your escapades with Kathy and Marie.”

“Thanks, pal” Gary said, giving Ron the evil eye.

They visited for a while and returned to the tunnel. When they got back to the north end, Gary made it up the first 45’ and sat down to rest. He decided this would be a good time to check out the armory. The armory turned out to be circular and was directly below the 220,000-gallon propane tank. It had a domed ceiling to support the weight of the tank sitting above. However, the tank had been constructed so that most of the weight rested on the outer rim of the tank, alleviating the need for the ceiling to do more than support a fraction of the weight.

“Where’s the ammo?” Gary asked.

“Under the floor,” Ron replied.

“When are we going out and raising hell, partner?” Gary asked.

“Tonight too soon?” Ron asked back.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 4 – The Boy’s Night’s Out

“I think I’ll take one of these MP5’s,” Gary said, “Hope I don’t have to use the pistol, though. By the way, where are we going?”

“They have another CP set up at the Mall,” Clarence said, “Derek and the others are already in place, just waiting for us to show up.”

“I get tired of going to the Mall,” Gary said, “Can’t we find some other place to hit them?”

“You haven’t been out of the housing tract since May, except to visit with Jan this morning and you’ve never been on a raid at the Mall,” Ron pointed out.

“So, are we going to surround them and kill them all off? Boring,” Gary responded.

“One of these days, Gar; one of these days,” Ron repeated the all too common (joking) threat.

“Are you sure it was 80 pounds Ron? She didn’t look that bad to me,” Gary commented.

“All of your taste is in your mouth,” Ron laughed.

When they arrived at the Target store just down the street from the Mall, Jan parked the van and the 3 men slipped quietly over to the fire station. From what Gary could see, there weren’t many men at the CP, maybe 9 or 10. Gary didn’t even hear the rifles go off, but suddenly the men went down like they’d been hit with sledgehammers. A couple of militiamen checked the bodies, but didn’t take the firearms, leading Gary to believe that the people only had M9’s. They went into the tent and came out with a briefcase. Gary, Ron, and Clarence walked back to Target and got into the van.

“How’d it go?” Jan asked.

“Good guys 10, bad guys zip,” Clarence replied.

“Boring,” Gary said.

“Aw, didn’t Gary get to shoot his whittle pop gun?” Jan baby talked.

“I could have taken out the whole bunch Jan,” Gary said.

“We were just there to observe, Jan,” Ron explained.

“I’m sure you could have Gar,” Jan said, winking at Ron.

“He probably could have Jan, Ron said, “Gary is quite the marksman. Killed a guy at 600 yards.”

Jan looked at Gary, sizing him up. 600 yards, huh? The only shot she had ever heard of, that had involved a shooting at 600 yards, was what's his name. Well, Gary slipped up a notch or two in her esteem, but he still had a ways to go. At least good old Gar had never hit on her. Of course when they knew each other, she was 75 pounds lighter and probably intimidated him. Besides, she'd been married at the time and her husband carried a gun. She figured that the gun didn't scare Gary, nor did the fact that she was married. Yep, it was probably the way she looked at 120 pounds.

They arrived back at Jan's and she parked the van in the garage. The three men thanked her and headed for the tunnel to return to the housing tract. They left the guns in the armory and returned to the OP.

"I wonder what kind of papers they got?" Gary remarked.

"Probably just the usual requisitions and the like," Ron suggested, "It was only a company HQ."

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Meanwhile, the successful attack on the Federal Building in San Francisco gave others ideas. An ex-SEAL who owned a security company in California didn't lose any sleep when 3 members of the "gang of five" bit the dust. He had acquired some hot Intel that the other 2 members were going clubbing in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco Friday and Saturday, including the bars they were stopping at. Steve had to smile, because the news of their deaths in these clubs would kill any chance the DNC would have of making them into Martyrs.

He knew exactly the person to do it too. She was an ex-Assassin who worked for various Federal agencies when they needed someone quietly killed. She would be perfect for this assignment, because she could fit right in. Matter of fact, she made Rosie O'Donnell look like Sandra Bullock! Her code name was Big Mama, and her cover was as a member of a notorious Dyke Biker gang called Dykes On Bikes.

Their vests had DOB emblazoned on the back with skull and crossbones. She rode a Volkswagen Trike and always wore leathers with her ample cleavage hanging out. Steve knew how to contact her, and she called him back on a secure cellular phone, and he gave her the assignment. She asked him a question, and he agreed that her way was better.

The next night Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer were at the Pink Pagoda without their Secret Service agents, since no men were allowed. Diane wasn't too keen about ditching their protection, but figured the .38 special she carried in her purse would be sufficient. She'd heard a lot about these bars by her friend Barbara, who frequented them every time she was in San Francisco. They had several drinks when the roar of

choppers could be heard outside if you were close enough to the door to hear it over the screaming disco-funk music.

Suddenly the Dykes on Bikes walked in, and the floor cleared. While they were more than welcome, no one wanted to mess with them. After they commandeered the best seats in the house, Big Mama put her plan into action. Several of the DOBs went on the prowl for “girlfriends”. One grabbed Barbara and Big Mama grabbed Diane. All of a sudden a slow song came on, and Big Momma pulled Diane close. When no one could see, a little needle flicked out of her ring, and she embedded it into the Senator. Her cries were muffled by Big Mama’s ample bosom, and when the song ended, she let her gently slump to the floor, saying “I guess my date’s had too much to drink.” So she switched dates with the other DOB member, and repeated the process. Meanwhile the Bouncers recognized the Senator and tried to revive her, and then called the paramedics while they did CPR on her. 2 minutes later, Barbara joined her on the floor, and the DOB’s split the scene shortly thereafter.

The San Francisco Chronicle ran a front page story the next day about Boxer and Feinstein in the hospital with an unknown illness after clubbing in the Tenderloin district, with very embarrassing and revealing pictures of them carrying on at the bar.

A week later, the Chronicle ran an update that both Senators had to be admitted to a Nursing home in a coma and on a respirator. Their doctors did not expect them to recover, and they didn’t know the cause of their mystery illness. Big Momma disappeared, and was never heard from again. A whole team of Secret Service agents was terminated the same day because they couldn’t turn up a useful lead, and were charged with dereliction of duty because they let the two Senators out of their sight. Their excuses fell on deaf ears, and they realized they were lucky to be alive, and decided to retire quietly and find another line of work.

The agents had heard, by way of their friends on the White House detail, that The Boss was gunning for a group in Palmdale, California. It wasn’t San Francisco, but the weather in southern California even beat the weather in San Francisco so they decided to approach the folks in Palmdale. The problem was that The Boss had ringed the survivalist community in with a company of soldiers. The inside word was that the group was responsible for that hit on the CP at the Mall, so they settled in to wait for one of the group to appear. They had pictures of the three old men who supposedly ran the operation.

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18Aug07...

“Someone attacked Boxer and Feinstein last night,” Gary announced when he entered the OP.

“Kill them?” Ron asked hopefully.

“No, they’re in the hospital,” Gary replied. “I read the Chronicle once in a while, too. It said that they were in the hospital with an unknown illness after clubbing in the Tenderloin district, with very embarrassing and revealing pictures of them carrying on at the bar.”

“Couldn’t have happen to a more deserving couple,” Ron laughed.

“So what was in those papers they picked up last night?” Gary asked. “Requisitions like you figured?”

“I wish,” Ron said, “It would have made life a whole lot simpler.”

“What do you mean by that crack?” Gary asked.

“There are orders here to reestablish the relocation camps,” Ron said.

“There aren’t any refugees, so why would they need relocation camps?” Gary asked.

“It looks like they’re going to start rounding up militia units,” Ron said.

“Anything in there about us?” Gary perked up.

“Not one word beyond keeping us holed up in the compound,” Ron said, “It just doesn’t make any sense.”

I guess we’d better stay close to home for a few days and let things cool down partner,” Gary suggested.

25Aug07...

“Hey Ron you awake?” Gary said entering the OP.

“Halfway,” Ron muttered, “What brings you out so early?”

“It’s not early, it is 8:30,” Gary replied.

“Middle of the night,” Ron muttered.

“Anyway, they fired those Secret Service agents,” Gary said.

“What Secret Service agents?” Ron asked.

“The ones that were guarding the dynamic duo,” Gary explained. “I think they got railroaded. Charged them with dereliction of duty because they let the two Senators out of their sight. They should have gotten the award for valor for just putting up with the two

broads.

“What happened to the bimbos,” Ron asked.

“They had to be admitted to a Nursing home. They were in comas and on respirators,” Gary said. “Bimbos? Isn’t that a little hash?”

“I guess there’s a God after all,” Ron laughed. “Serves them right. My Mama always said bimbos is as bimbos does.”

“Tell me Forrest, when are we getting out of this place?” Gary asked.

“A few days,” Ron answered, “Let them get a little further along on the relo camp and we’ll take it out.”

31Aug07...

The entire militia had left via the tunnel and had climbed aboard a ‘borrowed’ school bus. Jan drove her friends Ron and Gary and their friend Clarence.

“So, where is this camp being built?” Jan asked.

“You know the park on 10th Street West just this side of Lancaster?” Ron asked.

“Sure, where do you want me to drop you off?” Jan asked.

“Gary quit pouting, so we’re going to let him shoot his gun tonight,” Ron teased, “About a block south should do.”

“You guys haven’t changed in 9 years,” Jan said.

“Has it been that long?” Gary remarked, “Only seemed like 6 to me.”

“Is he always like this?” Jan asked.

“Sometimes he’s worse,” Ron admitted.

Considering the size of the park, the Army didn’t seem to have many soldiers on guard. They let Gary kill both of them. It took him a whole mag, but they were down for good. They set the half-finished buildings on fire and headed back to Palmdale.

“Looks like we picked up a tail Ron,” Jan said, “I told you that you should have stayed in the back.”

“They’re civilians,” Clarence said turning from the back window, “But, they have a red light on so I suppose we’d better pull over. We can always kill them.”

One man approached Jan and a second slipped up along the right side of the vehicle. Jan started to roll down her window when...

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 5 – On His Majesty’s Secret Service

...the second man put his gun right up against Ron’s window. “Secret Service,” the agent said, “Roll down that window very carefully.”

“What did we do to attract the attention of the Secret Service?” Ron asked. “Dubya must be getting real desperate to send you boys after us.”

“Are you Ron Green?” the agent asked.

“You’re pointing a gun at me and you don’t even know who I am?” Ron snapped.

“Answer the question,” the agent insisted.

“Yes, I’m Ron Green, “But you bit off a bigger bite than you can chew guy.”

“Good,” the agent said lowering his pistol, “Can we talk?”

“About what?” Ron asked.

“About us joining your survival community,” the agent said.

“Why would we want to let the Secret Service in?” Ron laughed. “You must think we just fell off the turnip truck.”

“We’re the agents who were guarding the Senators in San Francisco,” the agent said, “You may have heard of us. We got fired for no reason at all.”

“Dereliction of Duty, I heard,” Ron said.

“Following Senator’s Feinstein’s orders is what really happened,” the man replied. “Had a .38 in her purse and said she could handle any trouble that came up.”

“She was as arrogant in real life as she was on TV, huh?” Ron ventured.

“She was a princess on TV compared to real life,” the man said, “In real life she and Boxer were real bimbos.”

“What did I tell you Gar-Bear?” Ron said turning around.

“What kind of a name is Gar-Bear?” the agent asked, “Sioux?”

“It’s German Mr. Secret Service Man,” Gary said, “And I have a temper to match.”

“No offense,” the agent said, “What do you say?”

“Suppose we believe you for a minute,” Ron said. “You have all of your things with you?”

“They’re at the Days Inn,” the agent replied.

“Give me the key and get in back,” Ron said. “Don’t try nothing, old Gar-Bear’s a dead shot with that MP5.”

“Yeah, we saw,” the agent laughed.

“We’re gonna have to blindfold you guys,” Ron said. “And don’t listen either.”

“Ron, we don’t have any blindfolds,” Clarence pointed out.

“Ok, you guys just close your eyes,” Ron said, “And don’t peek.”

When they got back to Jan’s, they led the SS men down to the tunnel and over to Moon Shadows. Gary pulled Ron aside and asked if he’d lost his mind.

“Don’t peek and don’t listen?” Gary said, “Are you nuts?”

“Figured I’d let you use them for target practice if they don’t check out,” Ron explained, “You are a lousy shot with that MP5, partner.”

“They were too close,” Gary popped off, “I’m used to shooting at 600 yards.”

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Fortunately for the men, the Chronicle had done a follow up story with the agents’ pictures. This established their identities. The question of whether or not they would be allowed to join the community was settled soon after when they revealed what they knew of Bush’s plans. Their colleagues on the White House detail had been more than obliging in view of the raw deal they’d gotten.

They didn’t have places, dates and times, but they did have a pretty fair overview of what Dubya had in mind. He intended to round up all of the militia groups around the country and place them in relo camps. This jived pretty much with the orders they’d taken from the tent. After that, he was going to start collecting the rest of the firearms. This didn’t seem to be in character for Bush and the three old geezers said so.

The agents were quick to point out that he’d signed USA PA II that included a strongly beefed up AWB. FEMA, they claimed was going to be assigned to assist the ATF. Gary, Ron and Clarence weren’t convinced and the agents pulled out their bona fides in desperation. It was a complete copy of the President’s files on each of the three men.

“Where did you get this?” Ron asked, shaking his head at the contents of his file.

"Is it accurate?" the agent, Paul Shelton, asked.

"Too accurate," Ron said, "There are things in here that I thought only my wife and I knew."

"What about your file Mr. Olsen?" Paul asked.

"It has everything the file that Marshall Thomas gave me and more," Gary acknowledged.

"Mr. Rawlings," Paul asked, "What about your file?"

"Well, I told Ron and Gary that I was pretty sharp and didn't get caught," Clarence admitted. "I guess I should have said didn't get arrested. What are you going to do with these files?"

"They're yours to keep," Paul said, "To my knowledge there's only one other copy of those files."

"Ron? Clarence? I'm going to burn this file," Gary said.

"Right behind you partner," Ron agreed.

"Wait for me," Clarence added.

"Well?" Paul asked.

"Very impressive bona fides, Paul," Ron said, "As far as I'm concerned you're in."

"I agree," Gary said.

"Me too," Clarence agreed.

When the three old geezers returned to the OP, Ron thought to ask Paul if he was the only one who knew the contents of the files or had all 6 agents read them.

"I'm the only one in this group, Ron, but Marshall Thomas saw them some time ago," Paul replied.

"He never said a word about it," Gary said, "But it explains something that happened a while back."

"We'd like to borrow a set of your credentials," Ron said, "Gary is pretty handy with his computer and can duplicate them."

"No need for that guys, there are blanks in our luggage together with the embosser and spare badges," Paul admitted.

"Marshall didn't bring us any," Clarence said.

"Marshall was about 10 minutes ahead of getting arrested when he came here, but we can probably get you some USMS ID and badges," Paul said.

"How about FBI?" Ron asked.

"Sorry, but we don't have the money it would take to get those," Paul said.

"Boys," Ron laughed, "Gary will spend money for anything he wants. How much do you need?"

"\$1,000 a copy Ron, they'll pretty expensive," Paul hedged. "But, they will be the genuine article."

"What do you need beside money?" Gary asked.

"Passport photos," Paul said.

"What about passports?" Gary asked.

"Real or fake?" Paul asked.

"How about real passports and real birth certificates for the whole militia, the spouses and children?" Gary asked. "Under 3 different names with the SS ID in one name, the USMS ID in a second and the FBI ID under the third for the militia? Oh, and high level security clearances for the militia members."

"Now you're talking big money, plus fingerprint cards and the passport photos," Paul said.

"Would \$1.3 million cover it?" Gary asked, "I'm down to my last few ingots of gold."

Paul got a strange look on his face. "I don't mean to pry, and if it none of my business, fine, but how big are the ingots?"

"Just the standard 400 troy ounce US Treasury ingots," Gary said. "We won't need much in the way of weapons unless you guys have some special needs."

"We're set, in that department," Paul said, "We have our .40 S&W's and our MP5K's."

"Don't you want some real guns?" Ron asked.

“Like what?” Paul asked.

“Oh, some 10mm MP5/10SD6’s and the S&W 1026 10mm pistols?” Ron replied.

“Wow, sure, Ron,” Paul said, “But one ingot will cover everything and give you change.”

“You sure got pretty trusting in a big hurry,” Paul observed.

“Anyone who thinks Barbara Boxer is a bimbo is ok in my book,” Ron said.

“Why doesn’t one of you come along?” Paul asked.

“How long will this take?” Gary asked.

“2 or 3 days once I have everything I need and about a month for delivery,” Paul said.

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“Do you trust him?” Clarence asked.

“Doesn’t matter, it’s only gold and I need the target practice,” Gary said. “Did you see who Arnold appointed to fill Feinstein’s and Boxer’s places?”

“Who?” Clarence asked.

“Pete Wilson and Gray Davis,” Gary said.

“You’re kidding,” Ron laughed. “They’ll never agree on anything.”

“You’re probably right partner,” Gary laughed, “But I think it’s a match made in Heaven. Besides, Arnold either made everyone happy or everyone mad.”

“He’s probably going down in state history as the great compromiser,” Ron said.

“Or, the worst Governor we ever had,” Gary laughed.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 6 – Last Hurrah

01Oct07...

“They sure look real Paul,” Gary exclaimed.

“That’s because they are real guys,” Paul said, “Up to a point. Sorry I didn’t have any money left to return to you, but it was harder than I thought it would be to get the computer records created.”

“What computer records?” Ron asked.

“If anyone runs a computer check on any of those ID’s the computer will return an ID that shows they’re valid,” Paul explained. “If they dig deeper, you’re in trouble, but most times people just believe the computer and you’re home free.”

“I appreciate you shaving a few years off my age,” Clarence grinned.

“Well Clarence,” Paul explained, “The three of you are too old to be real SS, FBI or US Marshals, so I had to make you younger to make the ID’s believable. If anyone says anything, you can say it’s been a tough career and you’re really looking forward to retirement in a few months. Gary can say he’s been desk bound due to an old injury and he almost never gets into the field.”

“I suppose this means I’ll have to shave and wear a suit,” Gary grouched.

“Sorry Gary,” Paul laughed, “But you can’t run around in faded jeans and a golf shirt if you intend to use those ID’s. By the way, this is quite a setup you folks have.”

“It’s amazing what blood money will buy,” Gary scoffed.

“Blood money?” Paul asked.

“He just has a guilty conscience for turning Wesley Clark in,” Ron commented.

“But he was a traitor,” Paul responded.

“Maybe, but even traitors get the trial first and shot second,” Gary snapped. “Go ask Marshall about that, if you have any questions.”

“The President has been a little erratic since Clark locked him up,” Paul admitted, “Probably PTSD.”

“You like your new toys?” Ron asked.

“Not bad, Ron,” Paul smiled broadly, “But those 1026’s have quite the recoil. Maybe

that's why the FBI dropped them in favor of the .40 S & W."

"A friend of mine says it's because the FBI is a bunch of limp wrists," Gary pointed out. "He later claimed I got it all wrong, but it the shoe fits..."

"How do you manage to handle something that powerful Gary?" Paul asked.

"I don't," Gary admitted. "If it was up to me, I'd tote a Ruger Vaquero and a Winchester rifle in .45 Colt. But, usually, I carry my Super Match and a PT1911. I have been known to shoot a .50 caliber on occasion, but it's pretty heavy to lug around."

"That's ok Gary," Paul said, "I didn't much care for Geraldo either."

"Is this the worst kept secret in the country?" Gary lamented.

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02Oct07...

"It's time for another expedition," Gary announced.

"What now?" Ron groaned.

"Well, how about I buy a tour bus or two and we tour country?" Gary suggested.

"And do what?" Clarence asked.

"We do have a list of the relo centers," Gary observed. "We can do like before and take out the guards and set those Patriots free. That ought to keep the government busy for a while."

"Gary, your ego is writing checks your body can't cash," Ron remarked.

"*Top Gun*, 1986," Gary smiled, "Bet you thought you had me with that one."

"I knew I'd heard that somewhere," Ron said, "But the point is valid. You're going to get us all killed."

"Puck, puck, puck," Gary responded, trying to contain his laughter.

"It's cluck, cluck, cluck, butthead," Ron growled, "And I am not."

"We're more likely to get caught if we go sneaking around partner," Gary insisted. "Look, let's get this gold used up before the price falls."

"We're going to need 3 busses," Clarence suggested, "But what kind of excuse are we

going to use to be driving around the country? These aren't normal times, you know. And the President must be watching us pretty closely."

"Why don't you knock it off with them negative waves?" Gary demanded.

"I know that one," Ron said, "*Kelly's Heroes*, 1970."

"Ok so maybe a bus tour isn't the way to go," Gary agreed, "But it's still time for an expedition."

"How are we going to get the vehicles out?" Clarence asked.

"We just drive the mobile CP out, bold as you please, Clarence," Gary said, "It's due for an oil change or something, right?"

"And the pickups?" Clarence asked.

"Buy new ones. Some of those 6 passenger cabs with the long boxes and big engines and 4-wheel drive," Gary recommended. "And put campers on them like before. Let's go first class this time."

"Like what?" Ron asked.

"Oh, I sort of like the Dodge Ram 3500 Quad Cab with the 5.9 liter Cummings 6BT Diesel engine, long wheel base and 6-speed manual transmission." Gary offered. "And get them loaded, with all the stuff."

"I thought you didn't know anything about cars," Clarence frowned.

"Anyone who wears a cowboy hat knows about pickups, Clarence," Gary grinned from ear-to-ear.

"This is going to take a while and probably cost you a couple of those gold bars," Ron speculated.

"Then you had better get started Ronald," Gary replied mirthfully.

"Gar-Bear, by the time we get those pickups bought and outfitted, your pal George will be a lame duck," Ron protested.

"I'm not worried about George, Ron; it's the guy who follows him that I want to send a message to," Gary responded. "Just do it, ok? The whole idea is to work within the system and just give it a nudge here or there from time to time."

Gary left to take a nap and Ron and Clarence got to visiting.

“Clarence, he’s absolutely certifiable,” Ron complained. “Give it a nudge, he says. Blowing up bridges is a nudge? Taking down the electrical grid for a few months is a nudge?”

“I suppose it’s all in how you look at it Ron,” Clarence said, “Gary means well. And you’ll have to admit, it did stir things up pretty good.”

“Yeah right,” Ron complained. “And got the housing tract surrounded and forced us to sneak out through a tunnel. And we’ve been cut off from the utilities.”

“So?” Clarence observed. “Except for the generator noise, nothing’s changed. We have lights and gas and sewage. And, they didn’t bother to cut off cable or the phones.”

“I wouldn’t use the phone to get the time of day pal,” Ron replied, “They’re probably listening to every call we make and tracking our every move on the Internet.”

“I wouldn’t be so sure of that Ron,” Clarence disagreed, “Have you paid any attention to Gary’s office?”

“He has a dozen computer’s, so what?” Ron asked.

“Gary told me that he has some kind of computer program called a spider,” Clarence explained. “I have no idea how it works, but supposedly it goes from Website to Website searching for information. Anyway, he has all 12 of those computer’s running that spider thing of his. He claims that with all of the traffic he’s generating on the T-1 line that he can surf freely.”

“Does it work?” Ron asked.

“I don’t know,” Clarence said, “Probably not as good as he thinks it does, but it would take the feds a long time to trace all of that traffic, wouldn’t it?”

03Jan08...

“All of the trucks have been delivered and you’re ready to go partner,” Ron said.

“What about the mobile CP?” Gary asked.

“They pulled the engine and then said it was down waiting for parts,” Ron replied. “Put it back together last night, so we’re ready to go.”

“And you did get the Dodge pickups I wanted, right?” Gary asked.

“Almost 3 million dollars’ worth,” Ron explained, “And they got the Ham radios and everything you wanted including satellite phones.”

“Let’s go send Senator Kerry a little message, boys,” Gary smiled.

“Kerry?” Ron replied.

“Well yeah,” Gary said, “The Republicans don’t stand a chance this time around, so Kerry gets his turn. Although, I hope someone shoots him and Edwards gets the job. He’d be the perfect President, he doesn’t know squat.”

The situation around the US had really gone to hell. Militia groups were doing their best, but one little mistake and they were in a relo camp. Bush had never gotten around to picking up the firearms; he couldn’t even catch the militias, not all of them anyway. This was probably the three old geezers’ last expedition, too. Gary had said something about packing it in and moving to Switzerland or somewhere. He even suggested Mexico because as bad as the US dollar was, the peso was in far worse shape. And, he still had 80+ ingots tucked away in his basement.

“Well, I’m not quite sure how to tell you this partner, but I’m not going,” Ron said.

“What do you mean you’re not going?” Gary asked, “We’re partners.”

“Are we?” Ron asked. “Ever since you got that money for turning in Clark, you’ve used that money like a hammer over our heads. Hell, I bought into it at first, blowing up the bridges and taking down the electrical grids. But, not this time; you can count me out.”

“But why?” Gary asked.

“You aren’t that much different than Bush,” Ron said, “It’s let’s do this, or can we do that? I even put in a tunnel so that we could get out of the place after the Army camped out on our doorstep. And I built an incinerator to burn the trash. But getting those trucks for you was my last official act. I quit.”

“Ok, if you’re not going, the mission is off,” Gary said. “Give each member of the militia the title and keys to his or her pickup and we’ll forget the whole thing. Make that your last official act.”

With that, Gary turned on his heels and left the OP. Ron passed out the titles and keys to the pickups and called it quits. Clarence tried to talk to first Ron and then Gary, but Ron only said that he’d quit and Sharon kept saying that Gary was ‘in dispose’.

Clarence tried Roy next, but all Roy knew was that Ron had passed out the keys to the new pickups with the titles filled out to transfer ownership from the Association to the militia members.

Derek should know, Clarence thought, but Derek was as much in the dark as Roy. The men had one thing very much in common; they were the most stubborn people Clarence had ever known. Clarence decided he would have to take over running things until the two men got over their snit.

His first problem was propane. They were burning a lot of propane and had no means to refill the tanks with the Army blockade. He went over to talk to Jan and she agreed to allow a fill pipe on her lot. Then, Clarence talked to AmeriGas and wanted to know what it would take to put in a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long fill pipe. Ron didn't object to Clarence using the OP, but he refused to set foot inside. Clarence used some of the \$200,000 petty cash fund to pay for the pipe installation.

"Mighty nice of you to let me use the OP Ron," Clarence said, "I guess I'll have to take care of things for a while."

"You're welcome to use it buddy, just leave me out of it," Ron said not unkindly.

"What do I do when I need more money to keep things going?" Clarence asked.

"Go talk to Mr. Moneybags and tell him you need some more," Ron snapped.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 7 – Amends

“I’ll get it Lucy,” Clarence said.

“Hello Clarence,” Gary greeted his friend.

“Gary, come in, come in,” Clarence said, “Where have you been keeping yourself?”

“It’s a long story Clarence, so I won’t bore you with the details,” Gary replied. “Here, take these please, they’re pretty heavy.”

“What’s the gold for Gary?” Clarence asked.

“I presume that you’re running things now and you’re probably getting low on money,” Gary said, “Haul those down to Van Nuys and cash them in for currency when you need more cash.”

“How about some coffee and you fill in your Old Dutch Uncle on what’s going on around here,” Clarence suggested.

“I’ll take a cup of coffee anyway,” Gary agreed.

“Sit yourself down Gary,” Clarence offered, “And I’ll get us some coffee.”

“Thanks Clarence.”

“Here,” Clarence said handing Gary a mug, “Black, right?”

“Right.”

“Roy says that Ron passed out the keys and titles to the trucks but that he didn’t know any more than that,” Clarence opened the subject.

“Good.”

“Good, what?” Clarence asked.

“Good that he passed out the titles and keys,” Gary replied, “Tell Lucy this is a great cup of coffee.”

“Thanks. I asked Derek too and he said he didn’t have any idea what was going on either,” Clarence said, “So, are you going to tell me?”

“What’s to tell?” Gary shrugged, “I said something about sending a message to Kerry and Ron said he wasn’t going on the trip. Said he’d gone along but that I had a big head about the money or something and Lorded myself over everyone. Then he quit. End of

story.”

“He’s only about half right Gary,” Clarence said, “You have been a little aloof, but I expect you paying for everything and worrying about everyone has weighed heavily on you. Of course, you have kind of expected everyone to do it your way most of the time.”

“Well maybe a little, I suppose,” Gary admitted. “I was actually going to ask you to do me a big favor, but maybe this isn’t the time for it, huh?”

“I’m listening.”

“Well, we got pickups for all the militia people but we didn’t get pickups for ourselves,” Gary explained. “And Jan has been running us all over the place and could probably use a new vehicle, too.”

“I expect I could do that for you, what kind of vehicles and how do you want them fixed up?” Clarence asked.

“Would a pickup be ok with you?” Gary asked.

“Sure Gary, just like the ones we got the militia?” Clarence asked.

“I’d like a white one Clarence and you and Ron can pick out your own colors,” Gary responded. “Just don’t tell him I’m behind it, ok?”

“Ok Gary, I won’t say anything to Ron,” Clarence replied.

“Good, because he might misunderstand my motives here,” Gary said.

“And what might those be?” Clarence asked.

“I’m sick and tired of the whole thing Clarence,” Gary sighed, “Figured that I get a two-horse trailer and Sharon and I’d just get out and see some of this country before we’re too old to travel.”

“Actually, we need a mite more operating capital Gary,” Clarence said, “Could you spare five more of those ingots?”

“That’s too much for me to carry partner, come on over and I’ll dig them out for you,” Gary said.

“Ok, I can make a couple of trips,” Clarence agreed.

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Clarence no more needed 7 bars of gold than a hole in his head. He took the bars to

Van Nuys after calling ahead to make sure they had enough cash on hand. Derek helped him and they took the bars to LA and came home with \$4,690,000 in Eagles. Clarence filled the propane tanks, ordered the trucks and 3 of the 2-horse trailers. He had the back seats modified to tip up to reveal a gun case. Therein he secreted the rifles, submachine guns and other weapons. Ammo went in the campers, except for the 40mm grenades.

Clarence had gone down and done the Old Dutch Uncle routine with Ron, too and heard Ron's side of the story. It seems that Ron was angry because he didn't want to be a sitting duck in the mobile command post.

Derek saw what Clarence had done to the back seats and told Roy about it. Together, they set about modifying all 48 of the pickups in exactly in the same way. Clarence had bought 3 identical white pickups and a new van for Jan. Even with the horse trailers, he had almost exactly 4.5 million left over. He decided to have a birthday party for Gary on Sunday March 23, 2008, Gary's 65th birthday. Ron agreed to attend, but cautioned that he wasn't going to be the one to break the ice. Gary said he'd come, but he wasn't apologizing to anyone for anything.

23Mar08...7pm...

Gary and Sharon were at the party as were Ron and Linda. Both men were stiff and reserved, almost like they had a corn cob up their...

"Gary, why don't you tell Ron you're sorry you're a butthead and bury the hatchet?" Clarence suggested when he couldn't take it anymore.

"Ok Clarence. Ron, I'm sorry you're a butthead," Gary said.

"If I was as ugly as you, I'd be sorry too," Ron smiled.

"Being we have those nice new pickups," Clarence suggested, "How about we go see the country?"

"Sorry Clarence," Gary said, "I can't make it."

"Why not, you told me you and Sharon were going traveling," Clarence reminded Gary.

"Yeah, but I remembered something pal," Gary smirked, "The song says 'See the USA in your Chevrolet' and all we bought were Dodges."

"When do we leave Gar-Bear?" Ron asked.

"Will you be up by noon?" Gary asked.

"Hell partner, I'll be ready for supper by noon, how about 8am?" Ron asked.

“Now, just so we don’t have any more fights over money,” Clarence said, “We’re all going to start out even. I put an identical amount in the gun well under the back seats. To get the back seats to open up, pull on the choke on the dash.”

“Clarence, modern pickups don’t have chokes,” Ron protested.

“I know, that’s why it says Lights,” Clarence laughed.

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Unknown to Ron and Clarence, the Dodge dealer had made so much money on the deals, even after the considerable discount he gave them, that he had included an ACR GyPSI 406 Personal Locator Beacon in each glove compartment. The dealer had filled out the registration cards all in the name of the Homeowners Association and had mailed them to NOAA. All anyone had to do was turn on the radio and it would transmit a 406MHz signal to a satellite and a 121.5MHz SAR homing beacon. It ought to be interesting if several went off at the same time in different locations.

◦

“You really should let me drive,” Sharon insisted.

“Why, just because I don’t have a driver’s license?” Gary scorned, “You can’t drive stick shift, so I guess we don’t have any choice.”

“I can too,” Sharon insisted. “You bought that new Plymouth Horizon and left me sitting in Davenport, Iowa with no way to get to work except learn to drive the thing. Don’t you remember?”

“I remember that it was icy as hell and that’s the only reason you were able to learn to drive,” Gary said.

“Well, I can drive a stick shift,” Sharon insisted.

“Ok, you drive, just skip every other gear,” Gary laughed, pulling over.

It had been 1982 when they’d bought the stick shift and every car since had an automatic transmission. After she tried several different gears, Sharon gave up and Gary returned to the driver’s seat.

“Besides, the fake ID’s included driver’s licenses with each set, so I have 3 driver’s licenses,” Gary reminded her.

“When are we going to stop?” she asked, “I need to use the ladies room.”

“How about San Bernardino?” he suggested, “We’ll be there in 45 minutes. It’s only an hour from Palmdale to San Bernardino, you know.”

Ever been on one of those trips? The kids don’t have to go until you 5 minutes past the rest stop and 40 miles from the next one. Fortunately, the warm sun beating through the window lulled Sharon right to sleep.

“We’re here,” Gary announced.

“Where?” Sharon asked.

“The rest stop at Palm Springs,” Gary said, “I thought that you had to go to the ladies room.”

“When do we get to San Bernardino?” Sharon said, “I can wait.”

“Oh, about an hour ago,” Gary said.

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Gary was in front, Ron in the middle and Clarence was bringing up the rear. As Gary and Clarence stood stretching their legs and Ron went to dispose of this installment of his ‘water pill’ Gary noticed Derek and his family pull in, followed by Damon, who was followed by Roy who was followed by...

“Did you arrange this meeting Clarence?” Gary asked.

“Don’t look at me,” Clarence raised his hands, “Blame Ron or someone else.”

“Hi Dad, fancy running into to you,” Derek said.

“Yeah right, Gary snorted, “I told you I was taking I-40.”

“Then you should have gone straight ahead when you hit route 18,” Derek said. “And yes, the whole group is here, about a ½ mile apart.”

“Derek?” Ron asked. “What are you doing here?”

“Some of us talked it over Ron and we decided to follow you three around and slip off from time to time and complete the original mission,” Derek replied.

“Don’t look at me, Ron, I’m as surprised as you are,” Gary stated.

“That’s right Ron,” Clarence supported Gary.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 8 – Trapped & Surrounded

“Jeez, if I’d have known, I have brought some money,” Gary said.

“Money ain’t no problem Gary, believe me,” Clarence said.

“But we left the list of relo camps back in Palmdale,” Ron said, “Even if we do have enough money Clarence.”

“You mean this list?” Derek asked holding up a sheaf of papers. “Roy and I liked what you did to the back seats too and we did the same to all of the trucks, Clarence.”

“So we have people, money, targets and weapons, right?” Gary summarized.

“Sounds like it to me partner,” Ron agreed.

“Now all we need is for all of us to be willing to go,” Gary suggested, looking in Ron’s direction.

“Ron was just po’d because he didn’t have his own pickup Gary, I’d bet he’s ready,” Clarence pointed out.

“There’s a camp at Indio, let’s start there,” Ron said, reviewing the list.

Indio, CA shares the Coachella Valley with such international resort destinations as Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage and Indian Wells. Well inland, the city is at near sea level. It is an old community dating back to the mid to late 1800’s. Indio, which is Spanish for Indian, is an agricultural community and tourist Mecca, boasting several festivals throughout the year. Mecca, by the way, was the actual name of a town not far away. The relo camp was located on the east side of town, near the highway sign that announced one was at sea level. They group filtered into Indio and got motel rooms.

After dark, Derek and Roy left to reconnoiter the camp. The camp was small, with perhaps only 300-400 residents. It was built in the fashion typical of the new camps, circular with a guard tower in the center and roving patrols of FEMA guards with dogs. FEMA had learned it’s lessons after the spring of 2005 and no longer built its camps as squares or rectangles; those shapes were simply too vulnerable to attack. The new design also meant that it was pretty difficult to get a clear shot on the tower guards, because the towers were usually too far from the nearest approach for a shot from anything but a .50 caliber rifle made by an expert marksman.

“What do you think?” Roy whispered.

Derek pointed towards the roving guard and their dogs. “We can take them out, but I don’t see how we can get the tower,” he whispered back.

“Looks like a .50 cal machine gun in the tower, too,” Roy whispered lowering his binoculars.

“You never have an Abrams when you need one,” Derek jokingly whispered.

“We’d better get back to the motel and let them know,” Roy suggested.

◦

“What does it look like Derek?” Gary asked.

“Circular camp, guard tower in the center with an M-2, and roving guards with dogs,” Derek quickly summarized.

“How close can we get?” Ron asked.

“Not close enough to do anything more than take out the roving guards,” Roy offered his opinion. “If we had an AT-4, we could take it out, but we didn’t bring any.”

“How far are we from the 29 Palms Marine Corps Center?” Gary asked.

“Not that far, but there are a lot of troops up there training,” Roy replied.

“Did anyone think to bring their fatigues?” Gary asked.

“Dad means ACU’s, Roy,” Derek explained. “Yeah, we brought them why?”

“Do you think you could get into the base and steal some AT-4s?” Gary asked.

“Roy?” Derek asked.

“We’ll have to put Becky in charge,” Roy said, “She’s the jarhead and she’s been through training there.”

“Why don’t you boys take care of that and Ron, Clarence and I can run down to the Salton Sea and look around?” Gary suggested.

Becky took 3 others and they infiltrated the 29 Palms base. They liberated 4 of the M136 AT-4s and returned to Indio. The three old geezers went down to the Salton Sea, rented a boat and some fishing gear and went fishing. Unfortunately, they almost caught their limit. The Sea had tilapia, gulf croaker, corvina, and sargo. The tilapia weighed up to 3.5 pounds, and the corvina have weighed up to 37 pounds and measured 42 inches.

“The problem with fishing Ronald,” Gary said, “Is that I don’t like fish. I’ve never seen any of these kinds of fish before, either. We’re staying in a motel, what are we going to do with the fish?”

“Give them away, I suppose,” Ron replied.

“Yeah, right,” Gary responded, “We’ll just drive up and down Main Street in Indio with a sign that says free fish.”

“Why don’t we give them to some of those rest homes?” Clarence suggested.

Although Becky et. al had successfully stolen 4 M136 AT-4s, the theft had not gone unnoticed. The Marines at 29 Palms issued an alert to all law enforcement agencies and FEMA groups in the southern California area. And while Indio didn’t have an English language paper, one from Palm Springs picked up the story about the three ‘heroes’ giving the fish to the nursing homes. Someone put 2 and 2 together and FEMA rushed people to the Indio area. Meanwhile, the Palmdale Militia was finalizing its plans for the attack on the relo center.

Derek and Roy did another recon, just in case something had changed. Aside from a few extra guards, they noticed nothing in particular that concerned them. They set the attack for 0400 on the 28th of March. In the guard tower, 12 pairs of eyes scanned the perimeter of the camp, especially beyond the lights. One of the guards spotted Roy and Derek as they pulled out to return to their separate motels.

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28Mar08...

The militia slipped out of their motel rooms starting around midnight and retrieved their weapons from the pickups. They worked their ways to the camp from the motels and surrounded the facility just outside of the glow of the lights. It was a fair march from some of the motels and they weren’t in place and ready to go until shortly before 4am. Precisely at 0400, Becky fired the AT-4 exploding the now empty guard tower. Nearly simultaneously, the FEMA guards dropped to the ground, narrowly avoiding being shot by the 12 sniper units Derek had positioned at various locations. Meanwhile, back in Indio, the FEMA people were rounding up the families and herding them into the local High School Gymnasium.

Derek radioed everyone to withdraw, but as they turned to leave, the FEMA troops who had followed them to the camp opened fire. They were trapped, surrounded, and outnumbered. FEMA had them dead to rights, too because FEMA had sacrificed the empty guard tower before they closed the trap. To compound their problems, FEMA had flown in an elite unit from the east coast.

“Give the fish to the rests homes,” Gary whispered to Clarence. “That was real smart. Why didn’t we just waive a red flag and say here we are, come and get us?”

“I think we did, partner,” Ron whispered. “How the hell are we going to get out of this

one?”

“Don’t ask me,” Gary whispered back, “I was in the Air Force.”

The FEMA forces were well equipped and had night optics, MP5/10SD6’s they’d commandeered from the FBI, and M-24 SWS equipped snipers. They were, as was mentioned, an elite group and had been trained by Delta Force. They had only one shortcoming, overconfidence, in abundance. The terrain favored the militia, however and they slowly moved toward the FEMA troops. They had to get out of the trap before sunrise, less than 2 hours away. Despite the night vision equipment, the FEMA people didn’t even sense the presence of the militia members until it was too late. Knives, honed to a razor edge were the order of the night, followed by the suppressed MP5/10’s the militia carried.

They had no choice except to kill all 83 of the FEMA people. They came away with a great haul of weapons and a few minor injuries. When they arrived back at the motels, they learned that their families had been scooped up by FEMA and taken to the High School. They emptied out the motel rooms and headed for the school. By dawn, they had taken out the FEMA guards and had released their families. Gary suggested that they head for Chiraco Summit as soon as they had the horses and rethink the whole affair. They climbed the grade to the Summit and parked at the Patton Museum. The 51 new pickups stood out like a sore thumb.

“Why don’t we go to the Underground City?” Roy suggested. “We can get off I-10 at Desert City, go north on 177 to 62 and come into the place the back way.”

“What underground city?” Ron asked.

“Someone get a laptop fired up and hooked into a cell phone or the satellite phone,” Roy suggested. “Go to [desertdogs dot com](http://desertdogs.com) and look up the underground city and check it out. I think you might be surprised with what you find. We could move the operation there for the time being and get back to Palmdale for the stuff we left behind.”

“It says here that from Interstate 10 in Blythe, you take Highway 95 north for about 15 miles. At the BLM sign on the left, turn left up a short dirt road to the intaglios,” Gary reported. “Ok, we have to get these trucks out of sight anyway. Roy, you lead the way.”

It took them several hours to make the trip to the underground city. It appeared to be an old civil defense facility set up in a mine. Those new trucks were a good idea up to a point. There were no worries about maintenance or such, but they did stick out. Maybe some dull paint or something would help disguise the vehicles a little. Damon, Derek and Roy unloaded Damon’s Harley from the back of Damon’s pickup and Damon offered to make a run down to Blythe to pick up enough spray paint to do one vehicle. Once that vehicle was done, he suggested, they could take a pickup into Blythe and load up on more paint and some camo netting to hide the pickups from overhead. While Damon was gone, they removed the camper shell from Roy’s pickup and emptied the

contents into the mine.

Damon returned with several cans of flat earth tone colored paint and they painted Roy's pretty new truck until it was just plain ugly. It blended in pretty well with the terrain, too. Derek and Roy drove down to Blythe and rounded up camo netting, paint, lumber plus some fresh food from a market. They also picked up all kinds of things they would need for an extended stay at the mine. They erected the netting using the lumber and some rope and parked the pickups underneath. They unloaded the pickups into the mine and spent the next couple of days repainting the vehicles. Roy's camper shell was painted in camo too and went back on the pickup.

"Who is going to go back to Palmdale?" Gary asked.

"I suppose I could go," Derek offered. "What do you want me to get?"

"One pickup won't be enough Derek," Gary responded. "I would suggest that you get all of the ammo except for a little for the folks at Moon Shadows. Definitely bring the big guns and munitions. Why don't you get into my basement and bring back 10 ingots of that gold while you're at it. You'd better load up on pots and pans and food, too."

"I think that's an awful tall order Gar-Bear," Ron offered.

"There's no reason to go back to Palmdale anytime soon pal," Gary lamented, "At least not before the next election in November. But, if I'm wrong, you work it out with Derek. I'm just thankful we got out of Indio with our butts intact."

By the time Ron, Clarence, Damon, Derek, Roy and Jim had discussed it, they decided it would take 48 pickups to haul what they were going to bring back. The mine was huge and they wouldn't want for storage space, even with 48 pickup loads of stuff. They decided to send a pickup off every 10-12 hours, sort of randomly. That way, they would have enough people in Palmdale at any one time to move the things they needed and still have some folks to protect the underground city. Thoughts of propane and generators and such were but distant memories. For the moment, they had to survive in Indian country. (literally)

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 9 – A New Home

“I can’t believe you read the directions for the wrong place off that website,” Derek said. “If we hadn’t followed Roy, we would be looking at Indian carvings.”

“I get confused sometimes,” Gary admitted.

“There’s even a lake back there,” Derek continued.

“I should have had you bring a generator,” Gary said.

“I loaded up that 15kw rig of yours and brought it Dad,” Derek said. “We’ll have to get some bottles of propane in Blythe, but we’ll have lights.

“I thought I’d heard the last about propane,” Gary muttered. “Why don’t you just buy a used propane delivery truck and some 25-gallon bottles? We can run the generator from the truck and use the bottles when you have to go to town to fill it up?”

“That’s ok with me, what are we going to use for lighting?” Derek asked.

“There’s no reason to install anything permanent,” Gary suggested, “How about you buy up a bunch of drop lights. We can string them out along the entrance tunnel anyway, and when we leave we can stow them in the trailer with the generator. Since everyone has a towing package, why don’t you guys pick up a trailer for each of your trucks and we can move our stuff whenever we get ready to bug out?”

“You want the Mk-19’s and Ma Deuces mounted on the Hummers?” Derek asked.

“Better not kid, just put them on the floor in the back of the vehicles and throw a tarp over them,” Gary replied. “Who are you going to get to drive the Hummers?” Gary asked, “We have 4 more vehicles than militia members”

“Militia members Dad,” Derek explained, “The spouses can drive the pickups.”

“Get trailers for the Hummers too,” Gary suggested. “And paint them with the camo colors while you’re at it. In fact, if you have time, paint everything with that camo scheme.”

They ended up with used 6’x12’ U-Haul trailers. They only held about 400 cubic feet, but there were 52 of them. Only the trailer for the generator was an open trailer, again, 6’x12’. The generator was permanently mounted in the open trailer and a rack built to hold the dozen 25-gallon propane bottles. All of the goods were sorted and stored in the trailer to allow them to bug out with less than 2 hours’ notice. They even built a kitchen into one of the closed trailers. It was a low overhead, but not everyone in the world is 6’ tall and it worked out ok.

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"I never thought I'd see the day I was sleeping on a cot," Gary laughed, "And enjoying it. It's harder than my bed and I sleep good."

"How much longer are we planning on hiding out in this mine?" Ron asked.

"What's today?" Gary asked, "I have no sense of time anymore."

"June 17th," Ron replied, "They must have given up looking for us by now."

"I suppose we could move on," Gary agreed, "How about we start sending them down to Blythe and across the bridge one or two pickups at a time?"

"And then what?" Ron asked.

"Well, if I remember right, once we get east of Quartzsite a few miles, it's nothing but open desert most of the way to Phoenix," Gary said, "We could get off I-10 and go cross country from there. We could hit that FEMA camp in Goodyear then hightail it up to Prescott and cut over to Snow Flake."

"What's in Snow Flake?" Ron asked.

"Nothing that I know of, but it's just south of my all-time favorite Arizona town," Gary replied.

"I don't know what on earth is in Holbrook to get excited over," Ron shook his head.

"Nothing Ron," Gary acknowledged, "That's just the point. There is nothing much in Holbrook except that power plant to the west 5 miles. Not many people, but they're friendly once they get to know you. I just like the place."

"If you're so much in love with Holbrook, why don't you just move there?" Ron asked.

"I have, two or three times," Gary replied. "You are behind on your reading."

"Where are we going from there?" Ron inquired.

"I don't care, pick a place," Gary suggested. "Just make sure there's a FEMA camp in the area. I owe them SOB's, big time. You can pick all of the routes my friend, just make sure we end up in Texas in December."

"Where in Texas, Crawford?" Ron raised his brows.

"Or within shooting distance from there," Gary said.

It's ok to make the occasional mistake, just as long as you learn from them. If you're go-

ing to buy something for survival needs, for example, buy a little and try it out, don't just buy 50 cases and hope you learn to like it or it will do what you intended. You might starve to death, if it's a food product you can't stand to eat. The same thing applies to attacking FEMA camps. Don't walk into a trap; take your time, check it out; it is better to be safe than have to belly crawl 200 yards in desert brush and cut someone's throat. Hell, you might wake up a rattlesnake and get bit on the butt. Or, one of those FEMA guys might just get lucky and blow your head off.

They were very careful in the Goodyear area. No one even knew they were there. The AT-4 wasn't fired until AFTER they'd shot the roving guards and they were able to set about 3,000 people free. They drove up to Snow Flake and to a ravine about 20 miles south of Holbrook where they camped.

"Why are we camping here Gar-Bear?" Ron asked.

"You know," Gary said, "A guy could build one hell of a shelter in those ravines Ronald. Sort of a basement on top of a basement with a house on top of that."

"You'd probably have water problems Gar-Bear and have to bring a geologist and re-grade the whole area," Ron suggested.

"You're probably right partner," Gary admitted. (Read: Only in America - this is a shameless plug.)

"Where are we going next Ronald?" Gary asked.

"The map shows this highway going north out of Gallup Gar-Bear, so how's about we go up to Mesa Verde?" Ron suggested.

"Any FEMA camps in the area?" Gary asked.

"Colorado Springs," Ron replied.

"Close enough," Gary said, "But I'm not staying in any cliff dwelling."

"Linda and I were going to stay at Far View Lodge partner, but if you want to camp out, it's ok with me," Ron grinned.

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They stayed at Mesa Verde until they had seen every site. After that, they split up with half the group going north on 550 to 50 and east to Pueblo. The others took 160 to Walsenburg and I-25 to Pueblo. They formed up as a group in Fountain. The FEMA relo camp was just west and south of the 128 exit. They decided to go on up to Colorado Springs and use several of the motels in the area. It was early enough in the day that they could find a place to board the horses. The horses were becoming a real problem

too what with finding boarding stables and exercising them and keeping them fed.

“As much as I hate to suggest this guys, we need to sell those horses,” Gary announced.

“I’m all for that partner, they are a real pain in the arse,” Ron said.

“In more ways than one Ron,” Clarence added.

“Clarence you’re the horse expert, do you think you can sell them, the trailers and the tack and find us some travel trailers?” Gary asked.

“Gary, if I sell them cheap enough, someone will buy them and the same goes for the trailers and tack,” Clarence replied smoothly. “What did you have in mind for travel trailers?”

“Nothing too big and we have to be able to pull them with the pickups,” Gary responded. “New or used; it makes no difference to me. Take Ronald with you and get someone to drive my pickup, if you would. Just get 3 that are the same. Maybe 24 footers?”

Ron, Clarence and Damon set off to sell the horses and trailers. They decided to keep the tack because it didn’t take that much space and horses were easier to come by than saddles. They came back pulling 3 Airstream 25’ Classics that featured the limited upgrade package. They were about 3-4 years old, but in excellent condition. Gar-Bear took one look at the trailer and decided he needed someone to drive his pickup; there was no way he was going to try and maneuver the 25’ trailer. Mary volunteered, quickly settling that issue.

“You want me to camo the house trailers Dad?” Damon asked.

“I don’t know, never saw a camo’d travel trailer before. You guys talk it over and decide,” Gary begging the question.

“You want yours painted Clarence?” Ron asked.

“I’ll do what you do Ron,” Clarence grinned.

“Go for it Damon, but make sure they match the pickups,” Ron directed, “That way we’ll know who’s is which.”

“When he gets those done, what say we pay a visit to that relo camp?” Gary suggested.

“Do you have any idea how long it is going to take that boy to paint 3 25’ trailers with cans of spray paint Gary?” Ron asked. “Damon, just paint the tops and we’ll hang camo netting over them. I want to get back to that camp this year.”

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Nested as it was up against the eastern boundary of Ft. Carson, the Fountain/Colorado Springs relo camp was not an easy target. They had driven down 12/13 in pickups to minimize their exposure. They parked the 4 pickups on the 128 on ramp headed north bound and eased over to the relo camp. It was not a long walk and the three old geezers were along on this trip. Gary had picked up a Nikon 2.5-10x50 scope and had sighted it in. He was dying to try it out under these low light conditions. Both his and Ron's Super Match rifles had the optional Rader adjustable triggers and had been fine-tuned by their armorer. Gary wasn't sure about the Japanese scope. Some Japanese products were primo and some were just glitzy junk. He had also thought about buying one of the Springfield SOCOM 16's but USA PA II and the AWB cut off sales before he had the chance.

After they got into position everyone with a sniper class weapon picked out a target. There were more snipers than targets so some of the unlucky FEMA guys were guaranteed a place in the great beyond. It was on the count of three and Derek said fire-fire-fire. You could barely hear the pops as the rounds left the barrels and the guards went down. Becky let the AT-4 fly and the guard tower and its occupants became yesterday's news. A 40mm grenade blew open the gate and the militia hit the road without looking back.

The two explosions raised an alarm at Ft. Carson and they could hear the sirens and klaxons as they climbed into the four pickups. Half an hour later, they were all in their motel rooms in Colorado Springs and went to bed without a care on their mind. By the time the troops had responded to the alarms and had approached the relo camp, most of the residents had boiled out headed in 100 different directions. The post commander ordered his troops to stand down; he didn't particularly agree with what Bush was doing and it was FEMA's job, not his, to harass the public. His job was to protect and defend the Constitution and somehow that just didn't square with chasing those civilians.

The commander silenced the alarms and made a note in the log he kept. It read, "FEMA camp attacked, unable to respond in time." He waited a bit and sent notification up the chain, apologizing for the tardiness of his troops and taking full responsibility for the failure to respond timely. The General had just laughed and said, "Well, these things happen, don't they?" and hung up. Apparently not all of the Patriots were part of the militias. Maybe some of them were in the military as well.

George and Laura were looking forward to getting back to Crawford, too. The twins were still running amok and had this been 2004, Kerry would have won. As it was, Kerry was going to win this election; the Republicans couldn't field a strong candidate. It was a real shame that Arnold was disqualified from the presidency; he'd have charmed them.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 10 – The Barbeque

The barbeque. Word was that KC, the Southeast and Texas had great barbeque. He knew they would eventually be in Texas so maybe they'd check out the barbeque in KC and wander on towards the east and then turn south. Somehow they had to explain their odyssey and the great barbeque hunt seemed as good as any. Gar-Bear had finally gotten smart and sold the horses and these new trailers weren't all that bad to pull. Ron's mind jumped from subject to subject as they drove on US 50. They could have grabbed I-70 and gone to KC, but Gary mentioned Dodge City, so they had gone down to Pueblo and picked up 50.

On his good days, old Gar-Bear was fine, but on his bad days, he'd get confused and think he was Wild Bill Hickok or Matt Dillon. A few months back, he'd even gone through that 'call me Carlos' phase. That had been right after what's his name had been shot in LA. Gary had specifically asked Paul to get his fake ID's in the names of Samuel Hamilton Walker, Texas Ranger, Walker Colt), John Coffee Hays (Texas Ranger, Texas Paterson Colt) and Francis Augustus Hamer (Bonnie and Clyde), whoever the hell they were. Apparently Paul had recognized the names, he'd just snickered, but Ron was in the dark. And in Colorado Springs, Gary had gone and bought a white cowboy hat and a can of ScotchGard and started wearing his Laredo's again even though they killed his feet. When they got to Dodge City, they visited the reconstructed Front Street but the interior of the Long Branch Saloon wasn't a faithful reproduction. And, it turned out that Missy Kitty's name was really Dora.

The FEMA camp was located across the river in Independence, Missouri. Ron, Gary and Clarence found spots in a KOA park and the militia spread out among the motels in Kansas City. That evening, over dinner at a KC steakhouse, Ron decided to ask Gar-Bear about those names he'd picked out.

"So, Gary, who was Francis Hamer?" Ron slipped into the conversation while they waited for their salads.

"They called him Frank and he ambushed Bonnie and Clyde," Gary replied. "Got me a white hat in Colorado Springs because Rangers always wear white hats. It's their trademark. Let me ask you something Ron, if we're using sampling barbeque around the country for an excuse for this trip, what are we doing in a steak house?"

"Wanted to get me an authentic Delmonico steak," Ron replied.

"Well partner, you are way off base," Gary laughed. "Delmonico's was a New York restaurant and no one can agree on what an authentic Delmonico steak really was."

"You're just saying that because you wanted barbeque," Ron countered.

"So when are we going to visit Independence?" Gary asked.

“Tomorrow night after midnight,” Ron replied. “Got to get a barbeque sandwich for lunch tomorrow.”

“What’s the rush?” Gary replied. “We could spend a week in Independence and not see half of the tourist sites.

“I figured that you’d want to hit ‘em and get the hell out of Dodge,” Gary observed.

“We were in Dodge last week Gar-Bear and we are already the hell out of Dodge,” Ron laughed.

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The FEMA camp was actually closer to Lee’s Summit than Independence. Although they had used up the 4 AT-4s from 29 Palms, they still had enough from their Palmdale stores. The camp wasn’t particularly large and they were able to get pretty close in. Since they didn’t have any more space to hide guns, they figured to hit and run as they had in Colorado. Gary’s Nikon scope had proven to be a good scope and he persuaded Derek to let him shoot the guards within range one at a time until the alarm went out. He managed to get 4 before Derek got nervous and said “Fire-fire-fire.” Becky popped the guard tower and off they went, back to KC. For the next several days, they stayed in KC, but made the trip to Independence each day to see the sites.

“So, who was Sam Walker?” Ron slipped in the question during a conversation.

“Ever heard of the Walker Colt?” Gary asked.

They left KC and headed to Chicago, it was Gary’s kind of town. He was especially fond of a restaurant run by the mob. They had the best baby back ribs in Chicago and served beer by the pitcher with the meal. The Chicago FEMA camp was near the prison in Joliet and could wait.

They had driven by the place on the way into town and the camp was out in the open and would be, at best, a very difficult target. It had two, not one, rings of lights and they couldn’t even get close to the camp. They probably had a backup generator, too, so cutting the power wasn’t an option. The question became, “How does one attack a camp when the nearest area not flooded with light is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the camp?” The answer, though obvious, did eliminate the element of surprise.

“I don’t understand it Ron, the restaurant was right here,” Gary insisted.

“When was that, Gar-Bear?” Ron asked.

“The last time I was in Chicago,” Gary said.

“Ok, but when was the last time you were in Chicago?” Ron pressed.

“Uh, 1979,” Gary replied. “But, it’s called Timothy O’Toole’s Pub now.”

They gave up and went to Berghoff’s (now closed) where Gary got the baby back ribs, the same as in 1978 and bought a new Berghoff beer mug. His original Berghoff mug was intact, but the lettering had worn off. Nicer mug too at \$4 rather than the \$9.50 they now charged. Berghoff’s is a Chicago tradition, dating from 1890. If you’re ever in Chicago, try it, but don’t try to steal the beer mug, they just add it to your bill. I did not, I asked and the waiter sold me one! Told me it would cost the same, but at least I’d have a clean mug.

The answer to the light problem was to shoot the lights out, which they did the next night; and the night after and the night after that. Finally, FEMA ran out of light bulbs and they were ready to attack. They put it off for a couple of nights, however, until FEMA reduced the guard force back to the normal level. The camp was large and the guard tower was nearly out of range of the AT-4 rocket; 2,000 yards according to the laser rangefinder. The guards stayed well within the lights with their dogs too, at least 400 yards away. Derek could hear the robot from Lost in Space, saying, “Warning Will Robinson. Danger. Danger.” in his head.

“Abort-abort-abort,” Derek said into the mike. The militia slipped back further into the darkness and returned to the 8 pickups they’d driven.

“Why did you abort Derek?” Gary asked.

“There are about 90 guards and the range is just too far Dad,” Derek explained. “That guard tower is 2,000 yards. I don’t think it’s worth the risk.”

“Tell that to the people inside boy,” Gary snapped. “There have to be several thousand people inside that camp. How’s about we take out the tower and stir things up a little? Maybe they’ll try to break out. I know it’s a long shot, but 90 guards can’t stop several thousand people. It’s those towers that keep them timid. ‘Sides, we can take out a few of the guards even if we can’t get all of them. We have a lot of sniper rifles these days.”

“I’d have to agree with your Dad, Derek,” Roy said. “Even if we only take out half the guards or less, it will give those people a fighting chance. I’m willing to move in real close and lob a grenade at the gate, maybe I can hit it.”

“All right, but everyone, Becky included, fire on three,” Derek said. “And no more than two shots apiece then bug out.”

They slipped back into position and when Derek figured everyone was ready, he said, “Fire-fire-fire.” Most of the people took 3 shots before they bugged out and over half the guards were down. The rocket hit the tower at the base of the observation deck, which slowly leaned over and fell 80’ to the ground. Roy came up short with his first grenade, but in the confusion, reloaded, moved closer and fired a second time hitting the gate

squarely. As they melted away in the darkness, you could see the people beginning to pour out of the camp. They didn't stick around to count noses. It was a long drive back to downtown Chicago and their motels.

◦

My Fellow Americans,

“Over the course of the past few months, several of our FEMA relocation centers have been attacked and the dangerous criminals housed in the centers have been set free to prey on their fellow countrymen. Despite our best efforts, FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security have been unable to halt these vicious attacks.

I have a duty to protect the citizens of the United States, and I intend to fulfill that duty at all costs. Consequently I have determined that it is necessary to impose martial law to restore order. I realize that this will impose a burden, especially on travelers who are away from their homes at the moment. Effective at midnight Eastern Time, martial law will go into effect for an indefinite period. For those individuals away from home, they may report to the nearest federal building and, upon providing proper identification, will be issued a travel permit to return to their home.

These terrorists seem to be armed with nothing more than hunting rifles and stolen military equipment. I have always supported the right to keep and bear legitimate hunting and sporting firearms. However, since we can't distinguish who is using their firearm for a legitimate purpose and who might be using it against your government, I have ordered that all firearms of any description be registered. Take your firearms to the nearest federal building for proper registration.

I regret that this has become necessary. However, in the remaining months of this administration, I will do everything within my power to restore peace to our great land. I urge everyone to cooperate. Some are already calling for UN intervention to restore order and I wish to avoid that, if possible. However distasteful as it may be, if we must call in the United Nations to restore order, we will do that. Again, I urge every American citizen to cooperate with the government and restore order.

God Bless America.

◦

“What a load of crap,” Ron said. “I thought I was listening to Bill Clinton for a moment. What are we going to do now?”

“Yeah Gary, if we all go get travel permits, they're going to know it was us behind all of this stuff and we're going to get arrested for sure,” Clarence added.

“We have 3½-hours before martial law goes into effect,” Gary said. “Put out the word to

saddle up and head south on I-57. Tell them form a convoy with the guys in the Hummer's in uniform and the weapons mounted. When we get to I-40, we will head west on I-40 to Needles, and back to the Underground City. It's going to take the military a while to get up to speed on this thing. We'll just play dumb and if we get stopped, the militia can say they're escorting us back to California."

"Do you really think that will work?" Ron asked.

"I don't have the slightest idea Ronald, my crystal ball is at the cleaners," Gary sighed. "But if you have a better idea, let's hear it."

"Let's get to calling Clarence," Ron said, "It will take us most of those 3-4 hours just to get clear of Chicago."

Midnight found them on I-57 just north of the I-70 junction. There was no way the group could get to California without passing through several major cities. And, they were a long way from Palmdale and the Underground City in eastern California. If they could avoid Little Rock (Arkansas) they probably wouldn't see many government troops until Oklahoma City. And, if they could somehow skirt Oklahoma City and get to Amarillo, they could get into New Mexico. Gary was sitting in the back seat with his old road atlas and his mini-MagLite, looking for routes around all of the big cities. And, until they got to Texas or New Mexico, those desert camo paint jobs were more of a beacon than camouflage.

The word went out truck-to-truck to make all transmissions using the newer Bible Code, where passage references meant something unrelated to the passage. Gary figured that they probably be ok until they needed fuel. One modification they had the dealer make was to replace the 35-gallon tanks with aftermarket 55-gallon tanks and the fill pipes with aftermarket truck fill pipes with the larger openings. The Dodge truck didn't lend itself to under the bed auxiliary tanks particularly well, but a little rerouting of the exhaust had left room for 2 60-gallon auxiliary tanks. 175 gallons of diesel fuel was a lot of weight to haul and towing a trailer, the mileage wasn't so good. You weren't supposed to be able to do a lot of things, but money talked. They could probably get by with a single stop at some out of the way place where the dealer might turn a blind eye for a large enough pile of cash. You just never knew who would help you out and wish you well and who would help you out and turn you in. They holed up outside of Little Rock and rested. Ron spotted a little Mom & Pop gas station off I-40 and went to check. The crusty old guy who ran the place had diesel and from a remark or two he made, Ron figured this guy wouldn't be the one to turn them in. They topped off all of the tanks and resumed their journey.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 11 – Almost only counts in...

Horseshoes, hand grenades and dancing. They almost had enough fuel to get to California too. They should be good to New Mexico. The road was an uphill grade from Texas to Continental Divide or wherever they crossed. US 70 sounded pretty good to Gar-Bear and he'd mentioned it around. No one had any objections; they just wanted a route that would keep them away from roadblocks.

Don't promise what you can't deliver and Gary said that all they could do was hope. East of Oklahoma City they took 270 south and picked up 39 west. After they crossed the Canadian River, they stopped to rest again near a burg named Dibble. Town had three schools and not much else, and they were all in the same place at 100 Main St.

They rested up for about 12 hours and took off to the south using the rural roads. They picked up I-40 20 miles from the Texas panhandle. They did manage to fill up again and everyone had his or her fingers crossed that the fuel would see them to California. East of Amarillo, they hopped on I-27 south to US 60 and took it to Clovis, NM where they finally picked up US 70. However, Gary had been studying the map and it looked to him like US 60 would get them to the same place as US 70, Globe, AZ. They took a break and talked it over.

US 60 was the straighter route and might help the fuel situation. Globe and the Phoenix area were going to be trouble anyway you looked at it. What they really needed was a small fuel trailer and a hitch on the back of the propane delivery truck. Clovis was a fair sized community and they bought a hitch at U-Haul and had them install it on the propane truck. No one was sure what size ball they would end up needing for a fuel trailer, assuming they could even find one, so Roy just bought one of each size.

Cannon AFB was 8-9 miles west of Clovis and they had auctioned off some surplus equipment including a couple of 600-gallon fuel trailers. Roy saw one of the units sitting at a contractor's place of business and went in and asked if they'd be willing to sell the trailer. It had been modified from a pintle to a ball hitch. Roy probably could have bought a new trailer for half of what he paid for the used trailer, but he bought it and they put a 2½" ball on the Propane truck and hauled it off. After they filled the trailer with diesel, they topped off the remaining vehicles in Clovis and headed west on 60 wishing and hoping one more time.

East of Globe they stopped and assessed their situation. Traveling cross-country was out of the question now that they had the Airstreams. The run from Clovis had been more downhill than up and they weren't too badly off on fuel. They might have enough to make it, or maybe not. It wouldn't be easy to circumnavigate Phoenix, but then what? They still had to get to the other side of the river once they reached California.

The river bridges and highways were a natural choke point and no doubt there would be a passel of feds there to arrest anyone without a travel permit. They decided to send one pickup, sans trailer, to check out Globe. Jim got the short straw so he unhooked the

U-Haul and headed to Globe. He was back in less than an hour with unexpected news. Globe was deserted! He'd broken the locks off a pump and refilled his pickup while he was at it, too. And he'd grabbed a new Arizona roadmap for Gary.

Gary had always intended to replace the road atlas he'd gotten at Target on clearance for \$2.00, but was too cheap to spend full price. DeLorme sold the ultimate maps on CD and DVD, but they were expensive and the paper maps at \$20 per state ran over \$1,000, purchased one at a time for the full set. The Atlas & Gazetteer ran \$650, but covered the entire country. Then when he did have the money, maps were the last things on old Gar-Bear's mind. They slipped into Globe in 2's and 3's and topped off their tanks. There was no reason they couldn't make it to the Underground City now if they could just get across the Colorado river.

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They skirted Phoenix to the south and got on I-10 west of Goodyear. When they got to Quartzsite, they took state 95 north to Parker, AZ. They were so close to the Underground City now, they could taste it. There wasn't much of a troop detachment at Parker and they decided to use the Hummers and their weapons to blow through the town in one fell swoop. By the time the feds reacted from Blythe, they should be where they could take advantage of the camo paint jobs and netting. Surely, the feds wouldn't expect them to head towards Blythe on US 95; they'd probably be looking west on state 62. They all agreed on one thing; it had been sheer luck that they'd gotten as far as they had.

They made short shift of the troops in Parker and were across the river and headed towards Vidal Junction in nothing flat. Now if they could cover the 17 miles to the 95-62 junction and get turned south before the feds reacted, they were home free. About 3 miles south of the junction, their luck ran out. Here came the Apache gunships. They pulled the Hummers off the road and under a rock overhang, hoping against hope that they could get away with it. The three old geezers pulled to the side of the road, got out of the vehicles and proceeded to waive at the choppers. The Apache has FLIR and would have spotted the Hummer's were it not for a rock overhang and the hastily applied camo netting. The pilots weren't following SOP and were too high. They circled for a few minutes, during which time everyone took the hint and got out and waived.

They were so obvious about the whole thing that the pilots must have figured they had nothing to hide and pointed their birds to the northwest searching for the folks who had blown through Parker. Everyone hopped back in and they beat feet to the Underground City, only a few miles away. The pilots must have radioed for an infantry detachment because they were no sooner off 95 than a column of Humvees and trucks came roaring by headed north. They pulled into the mine area, draped the camo netting and headed for the mine. It would take the motors a while to cool off and they could only hope that the government didn't come searching in their area. While they were sitting waiting for time to pass, Ron walked up to Gary with a strange look on his face.

"I've been thinking Gar-Bear and I think that you pulled a fast one on me, you butthead," Ron insisted.

"When? What are you talking about?" Gary asked.

"Back in Palmdale on your birthday," Ron said. "I distinctly remember Clarence saying 'Gary, tell Ron you're sorry you're a butthead'."

"Yeah, so?" Gary asked. "That's what I said Ron. My exact words were I'm sorry you're a butthead. That's what he said to say."

"I'm sorry partner," Ron apologized, "I thought you pulled a fast one."

"That's good pal 'cause you said, 'If I was as ugly as you, I'd be sorry too'," Gary replied, "Now you're admitting you're sorry, so I can only presume that you're uglier than me. Beside, partner, we're pals. Would one pal do something like that to another?"

"I don't suppose," Ron said, "But I think you were around Tony too long."

"What do you mean by that crack," Gary nostrils flared.

"Nothing much, pal," Ron smiled, "But you ought to stop and smell what you're shoveling."

That broke the tension and everyone was laughing so hard that they completely forgot, for a moment, about the federal troops searching for them. The afternoon passed into evening and finally the vehicles were cooled off enough that they would not show up on the FLIR. No one ventured outside that night and they made do with flashlights and a couple of lanterns. The next morning, they moved the standby into the mine, placing it directly below a ventilator shaft. They would still have a heat signature, but hoped it would escape detection. They took their time and unloaded all of the supplies from the trailers. Between the propane truck and the bottles, their best guess was that they had enough fuel for the generator for about 60 days.

How do you cool off a hot engine in a hurry? Diesel engines need a warm up and cool down period and an enterprising fellow thought that it was a waste of fuel. He had developed the Orbit engine heat transfer system for diesel tractors and later for smaller vehicles. Every one of their vehicles was equipped with the system and an extra deep cycle battery, recharged by the large capacity replacement generators. The Hummers had a second alternator added, as did the propane truck. It's all about being prepared. Every vehicle also had an inverter that could supply 110 volts for a limited time. They were the John D. Rockefeller's of the survival set. On the other hand, they didn't have a set of those DeLorme maps, now did they? No matter what you have, you're always going to need what you don't have. It might just be oversight, or it might be lack of funds as besets so many survival minded people. Or, it might just be that you put it off, presuming that you have lots of time to get it later.

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“We should have stayed in Texas,” Clarence thought out loud.

“Why’s that Clarence?” Ron asked.

“Well, how are we going to get to Crawford by December?” Clarence asked.

“We would have stuck out like sore thumbs in Texas,” Ron said. “They speak a different language down there. All those y’all’s and such.”

“That’s not true Ron,” Gary objected. “I was down in Texas for a couple of weeks chasing what’s her name’s butt and it took me a month getting back to speaking English after I got back to California.”

[Watch it Gary, you already started one fight over barbeque!]

“So what’s next on the agenda?” Ron asked.

“I think I’ll order some of those DeLorme maps and have them sent to me c/o General Delivery, Blythe, California,” Gary replied.

“Yeah right and drive a camo’d vehicle into Blythe to pick them up,” Ron said.

“Well, how’s about we drop someone off near Blythe and send them into town to buy another vehicle?” Gary asked. “We’re going to need supplies and stuff anyway. And, we can get some paint and repaint the propane truck.”

“We wouldn’t have this problem if you’d have used paint we could wash off, Gary” Clarence suggested.

“And the first good rain storm and what then Clarence?” Gary asked.

Things were certainly back to normal. The three geezers were going at it tooth and toenail, all in the spirit of fun, of course. Roy got elected to go to Blythe and he did what any normal man would do; he bought a Dodge just like the ones they already had. Got it tricked out, too, just like the other 51 Dodges. Well, except for the fuel tanks, and that Orbit gadget, but close counted, he figured. Gary ordered the DeLorme maps over the net and used a debit transaction to pay for them. It wasn’t his best idea. The feds had a flag on his Wells Fargo account and the transaction popped up out of nowhere after several months of inactivity.

“Well, here’s another fine mess you’ve gotten us into, Stanley.” Ron said. “How are you going to pick up those CD’s?”

"It's another nice mess, not another fine mess and I'm not," Gary said.

"Then how do you propose to get them?" Ron asked.

"Damon doesn't seem to have much to do these days," Gary observed, "He needs to keep sharp. He can steal them."

There was something to be said for notoriety. How many people could claim that they were on the President's personal hit list? That's what this was all about wasn't it? Dubya being PO'd because Gary had asked him if he'd won the war on terror yet? Like George Bush gave a crap about some people he'd met a long time before and handed out medals they didn't really deserve for political expediency. As soon as the troops had figured out that the trio and their private army had disappeared from Palmdale, they'd pulled out anyway. And, sometime shortly after the attacks on the FEMA camps had stopped martial law had been rescinded. The people they'd shot up in Parker were there simply to guard the bridge.

There was still a lot of militia activity around the US, but the government had given up on arresting people. They simply took their firearms and let them go. The people in the camps were discharged a few at a time so as not to attract attention. The federal government could not be seen as being weak. Gary could have gone to the post office and picked up the map CD's. Even though the feds had a flag on his account, no one was assigned to watch for the flags and by the time someone would have noticed, he could have picked up the CD's 50 times over.

Stealing the CD's however brought the Postal Inspection Service into the matter. Congress empowered the Postal Service "to investigate postal offenses and civil matters relating to the Postal Service." Through its security and enforcement functions, the Postal Inspection Service provides assurance to American businesses for the safe exchange of funds and securities through the US Mail; to postal customers of the "sanctity of the seal" in transmitting correspondence and messages; and to postal employees of a safe work environment. Forget about the "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds," stuff, theft of mail was considered a serious problem. They hit a dead end; Damon had worn gloves and left no forensic evidence.

Finally, someone turned on a radio and found out that not only had martial law been rescinded, but also that the feds has assumed some militia group was responsible for the fiasco at Parker and had stopped looking for the culprits. Everyone decided that they'd better get their behinds back to Palmdale, the election was only about a month off and Gary wanted to vote against Kerry and Edwards. Gary was even having second thoughts about going to Crawford. It just wasn't worth it. Maybe, if the Democrats won, he'd be better off spending that bullet on Kerry. BTW, Kerry and Edwards won.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 12 – Home Again

“It nice to be home again,” Gary reflected.

“It is that, partner,” Ron admitted, “You weren’t serious about shooting Kerry were you?”

“I might if I thought I could get away with it, but I guess not, no,” Gary admitted.

“At least he asked Congress to repeal USA PA I & II,” Clarence added.

“I didn’t hear him suggesting they repeal the AWB,” Gary said. “And, I’m not holding my breath. Didn’t hear him say anything about cutting taxes, either.”

“At least we have utilities back,” Ron pointed out, “So we won’t be spending an arm and a leg for propane.”

“What do you mean we?” Gary asked. “You mean you, as in me, right?”

“Maybe they’ll resume Social Security payments Gar-Bear,” Ron suggested.

“I’m sure they will Ronald, that’s a plank in the Democrat platform,” Gary agreed, “But unless Linda starts getting rent on that building, you guys won’t have enough to go around. I don’t care one way or another, Derek brought that gold and we never needed it, so I put it back in the basement. Hell, I don’t mind paying; it’s still blood money as far as I’m concerned.”

14Feb09...

On the 4th Anniversary of Clark’s futile attempt to take over power in the US, John Kerry sent a bill to the House to formally outlaw all semi-automatic firearms. Bush’s Executive Order hadn’t been a formal Executive Order and wasn’t being enforced. Kerry insisted that those semi-automatic shotguns were as much of an assault weapon as the guns included in the AWB. Thanks to Bush’s heavy-handed tactics, the Democrats once again had clear majorities in both houses of Congress and CNN was speculating that the amendment to the AWB would pass. With ages ranging from 65 (almost 66) to 68, the three old geezers weren’t so sure they were up to any more fighting. Their firearms were all safely tucked away in the armory under the propane tank and they didn’t figure they had much to worry about.

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The members of the Palmdale Militia had all found jobs and life was pretty much back to normal in the US. LA and the other cities had long since started to rebuild and everyone was either working in the AV or down below. Gary had been right about their disability payments, they had resumed and they even got some back payments. Linda and her sister were in fat city, the tenant had been depositing the rental payments in an escrow

account over the past 4 years and the account had a balance of \$480 thousand plus interest. Clarence wasn't in very good shape, however, Cal IPERS had never recovered from the market. But, he had the money Gary had given him, as did Ron, and just about everyone was in great shape financially.

The economy was getting marginally better too, so Gary went down to Van Nuys and arranged to sell all of the gold. He had 86 bars left and sold them at \$1,625 an ounce. They delivered the \$55,900,000 in an armored truck.

The United States Treasury had released Federal Reserve Notes in denominations of \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000. All of these circulated among the public, but production has long since ceased. According to the Bureau of Printing and Engraving: "Although they were issued until 1969, they were last printed in 1945." However, if you happen to have any of these big bills, the Treasury will still honor them at face value.

Gary ended up with 2,404 inches, give or take, stacked on top of each other, of \$100 dollar bills. They were stacked from floor to ceiling in the basement, 3 layers deep. A bundle of 100 new bills is 0.43" thick.

Regrettably the Congress passed the new AWB and lots of Americans became criminals overnight. Did anyone really believe that a Browning semi-automatic shotgun was an assault weapon? The Democrats and liberals did, but then those names were nearly synonymous in the minds of many. Now, Gary was sort of what one might call a liberal Republican. At least he wasn't two faced about it like some Democrats he could name:

One way or the other, we are determined to deny Iraq the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them. That is our bottom line. – President Bill Clinton, Feb. 4, 1998

If Saddam rejects peace and we have to use force, our purpose is clear. We want to seriously diminish the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program. – President Bill Clinton, Feb. 17, 1998

Iraq is a long way from [here], but what happens there matters a great deal here. For the risks that the leaders of a rogue state will use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against us or our allies is the greatest security threat we face. – Madeline Albright, Feb 18, 1998

He will use those weapons of mass destruction again, as he has ten times since 1983. – Sandy Berger, Clinton National Security Adviser, Feb, 18, 1998

[W]e urge you, after consulting with Congress, and consistent with the US Constitution and laws, to take necessary actions (including, if appropriate, air and missile strikes on suspect Iraqi sites) to respond effectively to the threat posed by Iraq's refusal to end its weapons of mass destruction programs. Letter to President Clinton, signed by – Democratic Senators Carl Levin, Tom Daschle, John Kerry, and others, Oct. 9, 1998

Saddam Hussein has been engaged in the development of weapons of mass destruction technology which is a threat to countries in the region and he has made a mockery of the weapons inspection process. – Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D, CA), Dec. 16, 1998

Hussein has ... chosen to spend his money on building weapons of mass destruction and palaces for his cronies. – Madeline Albright, Clinton Secretary of State, Nov. 10, 1999

There is no doubt that ... Saddam Hussein has reinvigorated his weapons programs. Reports indicate that biological, chemical and nuclear programs continue apace and may be back to pre-Gulf War status. In addition, Saddam continues to redefine delivery systems and is doubtless using the cover of a licit missile program to develop longer-range missiles that will threaten the United States and our allies. Letter to President Bush, Signed by: – Sen. Bob Graham (D, FL), and others, Dec 5, 2001

We begin with the common belief that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and a threat to the peace and stability of the region. He has ignored the mandate of the United Nations and is building weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them. – Sen. Carl Levin (D, MI), Sept. 19, 2002

We know that he has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country. – Al Gore, Sept. 23, 2002

Iraq's search for weapons of mass destruction has proven impossible to deter and we should assume that it will continue for as long as Saddam is in power. – Al Gore, Sept. 23, 2002

We have known for many years that Saddam Hussein is seeking and developing weapons of mass destruction. – Sen. Ted Kennedy (D, MA), Sept. 27, 2002

The last UN weapons inspectors left Iraq in October of 1998. We are confident that Saddam Hussein retains some stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, and that he has since embarked on a crash course to build up his chemical and biological warfare capabilities. Intelligence reports indicate that he is seeking nuclear weapons... – Sen. Robert Byrd (D, WV), Oct. 3, 2002

I will be voting to give the President of the United States the authority to use force – if necessary – to disarm Saddam Hussein because I believe that a deadly arsenal of weapons of mass destruction in his hands is a real and grave threat to our security. – Sen. John F. Kerry (D, MA), Oct. 9, 2002

There is unmistakable evidence that Saddam Hussein is working aggressively to develop nuclear weapons and will likely have nuclear weapons within the next five years ... We also should remember we have always underestimated the progress Saddam has made in development of weapons of mass destruction. – Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D, WV),

Oct 10, 2002

He has systematically violated, over the course of the past 11 years, every significant UN resolution that has demanded that he disarm and destroy his chemical and biological weapons, and any nuclear capacity. This he has refused to do. – Rep. Henry Waxman (D, CA), Oct. 10, 2002

In the four years since the inspectors left, intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al Qaeda members ... It is clear, however, that if left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare, and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons. – Sen. Hillary Clinton (D, NY), Oct 10, 2002

We are in possession of what I think to be compelling evidence that Saddam Hussein has, and has had for a number of years, a developing capacity for the production and storage of weapons of mass destruction. – Sen. Bob Graham (D, FL), Dec. 8, 2002

Without question, we need to disarm Saddam Hussein. He is a brutal, murderous dictator, leading an oppressive regime ... He presents a particularly grievous threat because he is so consistently prone to miscalculation ... And now he is miscalculating America's response to his continued deceit and his consistent grasp for weapons of mass destruction ... So the threat of Saddam Hussein with weapons of mass destruction is real... – Sen. John F. Kerry (D, MA), Jan. 23, 2003

You hear all those Democrats talking about WMDs in Iraq? So Bush invaded and they weren't there, right? Who did they blame? Does the name Bush come to mind?

Getting an education seems to mellow some people out. In some ways, it had that effect on Gary. In law school, he'd gotten 438 out of a possible 440 points on the Civil Rights section of the final exam in Constitutional law. He'd skipped the one question because it was based on his teacher's personal views on the justification of war. The teacher said that there was no justification for war. I wonder what Elliott was doing on December 7, 1941? Gary knew what he was doing now; they'd locked him up in a nut ward and thrown away the key back in the late 1970's. Maybe Gary's liberal side explained why he was a soft touch at times. This was not one of those times, however.

They had brought out a new drug that partially restored the circulation in his hands and feet and after a couple of months he'd regained some of the feeling. Gary was really fired up over this AWB thing and he was itching to do something about it. But, what could he do? The pill didn't seem to fix his brain, so that damage was probably permanent. At least he had company; Sharon was starting to lose her short-term memory as well. She'd walk into the office and ask, "What did I come here for?" He didn't hazard a guess. Over a 30-year plus span, he'd learned never to second-guess his wife. It was a hard learned lesson, to be sure.

Did you ever get a headache? I mean a real headache; one of those that started today and ended the middle of next week? Gary was getting 'one of those' just thinking about the implication of Kerry's additions to the AWB. A lot of thoughts passed through his pain-wracked mind including the thought that he should have gone to Texas like he'd originally planned. He walked down to Ron's with every step making his head hurt even worse.

"Ron, do you feel like going to Texas after all?" Gary asked.

"Crawford?" Ron asked.

Gary could barely nod his head, "Yes."

"What's the matter Gar-Bear, you don't look too good?" Ron commented.

"Headache," Gary half whispered.

"Go home and take 4 Vicodin and call me in an hour," Ron advised. "If you still feel that way in an hour, the three of us will hit the road just as soon as you're able."

The Former Presidents Act, P.L. 85-745, 72 Stat. 838, as amended, 3 USC § 102 note, makes provision for a monetary allowance for former Presidents, payable monthly, at an annual rate equal to that of the head of an executive department as defined in 5 USC §101. The allowance is not paid during any period when the former President holds an appointive or elective office or a position in or under the Federal government or the District of Columbia government at other than a nominal rate of pay. The Act also provides for selection, compensation and status of office staff for former Presidents, as well as provision of appropriately furnished and equipped office space. A widow's allowance is also provided for the widow of each former President at a rate of \$20,000 per annum, paid monthly, if she waives the right to every other annuity or pension to which she is entitled under any other Act of Congress. This allowance continues until the last day of the month before she dies or remarries before age 60, and is not payable for any period during which she holds an appointive or elective office or position in or under the Federal government or the District of Columbia government at other than a nominal rate of pay. In addition, the Act authorizes appropriations for security and travel related expenses for each former President and the spouse of each former President, where the former President or spouse was not receiving lifetime protection by the United States Secret Service under 18 USC § 3056(a)(3); where the protection of the Secret Service expired at its designated time; or where the protection provided by the Secret Service was declined prior to authorized expiration in lieu of these funds.

Where did it say how much protection? Well folks, the GSA needed over 3 million to protect 5 ex-presidents, so it must be a lot of protection; maybe as many as 10 or 12 agents per president, or, maybe fewer plus expenses.

“Ron, I still have the headache,” Gary said.

“Take 4 more Vicodin and if you survive, call me,” Ron laughed and hung up.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 13 – On The Road, Again

“Ron, I still have the headache,” Gary said.

“Must be getting better Gar-Bear,” Ron said, “It’s been 2 hours.”

“Nah, it took me an hour to get to the phone,” Gary said.

“Well, you’ve got a problem then Gary,” Ron said, “You’re almost up to a lethal dose of Tylenol.”

“Ok, I’ll just take one more,” Gary said. He did, one at a time, for 4 times. 9 grams of Tylenol will either cure you or kill you, by the way (LD₅₀= 7 grams/24 hours). It turns into a milky white syrup in the liver and clogs it up. But, if you live, you might get over the headache. [Maximum allowable dose of Tylenol per 24 hours is 4000 milligrams (8 extra strength) LD₅₀ is 7,000 milligrams (14 extra strength) There is a treatment for an overdose. It’s Acetylcysteine and you don’t want have to take it. One name for it is Mucosyst by Bristol Myers-Squibb. It makes you empty your stomach, quick. It tastes and smells awful.]

The following Wednesday, the headache was finally gone. They took the Dodge that wasn’t camo’d but had had the extra tanks and Orbit gadget installed after they’d returned home and headed for Texas. Oh and Gary had been out and about the day before. He had everything he’d collected in a small paper bag, about the size of a lunch sack. He’d also thrown in a box of latex gloves. They took their Winchesters, Vaqueros and a single M-24 SWS with them on the trip; all were ‘legal’ firearms, except for the suppressor and they left it in Palmdale.

It took them 3 days to get to the Crawford ranch. They couldn’t get very close to the house, but Gary didn’t seem to care. They found a small patch of woods and Gary got out the M-24, put on the latex gloves and grabbed his lunch sack. From the sack, he removed several cigarette butts, a 7.62×51 rifle casing, a note and a screwdriver. He used the cheap Target screwdriver to stake the note to a small tree, dumped the cigarette butts in a partially scattered pile and sat down to wait. Ron and Clarence looked at the note in amazement and a broad smile slowly spread on their faces. They hadn’t realized that Gar-Bear was such an Arnold fan. Eventually George and Laura appeared at the front of the home to drive to town. Gary aimed high and sent a round crashing into the home, about a foot above their heads. He ejected the round from the M-24, and then went to where it had fallen and switched the casing with the casing he’d brought along.

The note? Arnold had a favorite line and had used it in several of his movies. It simply said, *I’ll be back*. The cigarettes came from the Mall near Movies 10 where people went outside to smoke. The screwdriver came from Target and the shell casing from a handful Gary had bought at a gunshop in Lancaster, purportedly to reload. Gary had been a big fan of CSI and decided that since he was going to leave clues, he ought to try and

control the scene as much as he could. They stopped at a rest area and he threw the brand new sneakers into a trash receptacle and put his Laredo's back on. He even persuaded Ron to pull into a tire shop and upgrade the tires on the pickup to Michelins. He even took them shopping and bought them new changes of clothes and genuine Stetson hats; white of course.

"Clarence, even if they catch us, there's nothing to tie us to that shooting," Ron chuckled. "Gary, I thought you wanted to kill the SBO."

"I did Ronald McDonald," Gary admitted, "But he'll probably get neck strain looking over his shoulder. And who knows, maybe we will come back."

"Where do you want me to point this truck, Washington?" Ron asked.

"Nah, Kerry is making a speech in Atlanta, claiming credit for rebuilding the city," Gary said, "So drive to Atlanta."

They picked up I-20 and headed to Atlanta. Kerry was scheduled to make his address at Ebenezer Baptist Church, followed by a tour of the newly rebuilt downtown area. How the church had escaped the blast was anyone's guess, maybe God had a hand in it. Presidents sometimes drove their Secret Service details nuts.

Assassinations and Attempts in US Since 1865

Lincoln, Abraham (president of US): Shot April 14, 1865, in Washington, DC, by John Wilkes Booth; died April 15.

Seward, William H. (secretary of state): Escaped assassination (though injured) April 14, 1865, in Washington, DC, by Lewis Powell (or Paine), accomplice of John Wilkes Booth.

Garfield, James A. (president of US): Shot July 2, 1881, in Washington, DC, by Charles J. Guiteau; died Sept. 19.

McKinley, William (president of US): Shot Sept. 6, 1901, in Buffalo by Leon Czolgosz; died Sept. 14.

Roosevelt, Theodore (ex-president of US): Escaped assassination (though shot) Oct. 14, 1912, in Milwaukee while campaigning for president.

Cermak, Anton J. (mayor of Chicago): Shot Feb. 15, 1933, in Miami by Giuseppe Zangara, who attempted to assassinate Franklin D. Roosevelt; Cermak died March 6.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (president-elect of US): Escaped assassination unhurt Feb. 15, 1933, in Miami.

Long, Huey P. (US senator from Louisiana): Shot Sept. 8, 1935, in Baton Rouge by Dr. Carl A. Weiss; died Sept. 10.

Truman, Harry S. (president of US): Escaped assassination unhurt Nov. 1, 1950, in Washington, DC, as 2 Puerto Rican nationalists attempted to shoot their way into Blair House.

Kennedy, John F. (president of US): Shot Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas, Tex., allegedly by Lee Harvey Oswald; died same day. Injured was Gov. John B. Connally of Texas. Oswald was shot and killed Nov. 24, 1963 by Jack Ruby.

Malcolm X, also known as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (black activist): Shot and killed in a New York City auditorium, Feb. 21, 1965; his killer(s) were never positively identified.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. (civil rights leader): Shot April 4, 1968, in Memphis by James Earl Ray; died same day.

Kennedy, Robert F. (US senator from New York): Shot June 5, 1968, in Los Angeles by Sirhan Bishara Sirhan; died June 6, 1968.

Wallace, George C. (governor of Alabama): Shot and critically wounded in assassination attempt May 15, 1972, at Laurel, Md., by Arthur Herman Bremer. Wallace paralyzed from waist down.

Ford, Gerald R. (president of US): Escaped assassination attempt Sept. 5, 1975, in Sacramento, Calif., by Lynette Alice (Squeaky) Fromme, who pointed but did not fire .45-caliber pistol. Escaped assassination attempt in San Francisco, Calif., Sept. 22, 1975, by Sara Jane Moore, who fired one shot from a .38-caliber pistol that was deflected.

Jordan, Vernon E., Jr. (civil rights leader): Shot and critically wounded in assassination attempt May 29, 1980, in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Reagan, Ronald (president of US): Shot in left lung in Washington by John W. Hinckley, Jr., on March 30, 1981; three others also wounded.

It was a mighty dangerous job being president or a leader of any sort. Missing from the list was Medgar Evers. On June 12, 1963, as he was returning home, Medgar Evers was killed by an assassin's bullet. John Lennon's name wasn't on the list either, probably because he was a British musician. Neither was Larry Flynt's, but that sort of made sense. Bush's name would probably end up on the list and if Gary had anything to say about it, so would Kerry's.

The Secret Service is very thorough. They remove mailboxes, weld manhole covers, station snipers along the route and do their best. In a city like Atlanta, they'd probably have the local police and Georgia state patrol. On the other hand, Kerry was flying into and

out of Atlanta and jet aircraft are most vulnerable during landing. They just had to beat Kerry to Atlanta. And, it's easier to talk about than do, you must realize. A 747 approaches at about 185 knots and lands at about 150-155 knots. That's a pretty tricky shot. Add a shot to take out a second engine on the same side and the numbers go off the scale. However, Gary had done some other shipping that he hadn't mentioned to anyone except Ron and Clarence. The two FIM-92A's had cost him an even quarter of a million apiece plus another \$50 grand to disable the IFF feature. They were tucked away in the camper shell and a person would have to practically dismantle the shell to find them.

The Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport has four parallel runways in an east-west configuration. They arrived in Atlanta a day ahead of the visit and checked out the airport from all sides. They concluded that Air Force One would land on the longest runway. The weather report said the wind was from the northwest at 12mph. They found a likely spot at Forest Hills Memorial Gardens and looked around for a motel. They were up bright an early the next morning and headed to the Cemetery.

The pilots of Air Force One are some of the best in the world make no mistake about that. They can handle emergencies that most pilots only worry about in their sleep. The two Stinger missiles hit the left engines of the aircraft just as it was approaching the outer marker. The second missile, the one Ron fired, caused the left wing to explode and the aircraft rolled into the ground just short of a terminal building. They left the launchers lay, got in their pickup and headed to the airport to see what that fire was all about. The police had immediately sealed the airport and they couldn't get in to observe their handwork. They went back to the motel and called it a day.

"I thought we'd see more security on the approach path," Ron said.

"They were rolling into the cemetery pretty good," Gary said, "I hope they didn't spot the truck."

"We'll know soon enough," Clarence lamented, "It's been nice knowing you guys."

"I think we ought to stay in Atlanta a few days, Clarence," Gary smirked. "See the sites and pay our respects to the late President."

"It was a shame about all of those reporters," Ron commented.

"Yeah right," Gary laughed, "Purely breaks my heart, it does. I hope there were a lot of them on that plane."

"You're quite the President killer Gar," Ron said, "You got Clinton in one of your stories as I recall and now Kerry."

"Don't forget Bush," Gary replied, "I told him I'll be back."

“You’re nothing but an anarchist,” Ron said.”

“I am not,” Gar insisted. “The term anarchy comes from the Greek, and essentially means ‘no ruler.’ Anarchists are people who reject all forms of government or coercive authority, all forms of hierarchy and domination. They are therefore opposed to what the Mexican anarchist Flores Magon called the ‘sombre trinity’ – state, capital and the church. Anarchists are thus opposed to both capitalism and to the state, as well as to all forms of religious authority. But anarchists also seek to establish or bring about by varying means, a condition of anarchy, that is, a decentralized society without coercive institutions, a society organized through a federation of voluntary associations.

“Anarchism is an expression of the struggle against oppression and exploitation, a generalization of working people’s experiences and analyses of what is wrong with the current system and an expression of our hopes and dreams for a better future. This struggle existed before it was called anarchism, but the historic anarchist movement (i.e. groups of people calling their ideas anarchism and aiming for an anarchist society) is essentially a product of working class struggle against capitalism and the state, against oppression and exploitation, and for a free society of free and equal individuals.”

“Huh?” Clarence responded.

“I may be a lot of things Ronald,” Gary said, “But I ain’t no socialist.”

“That’s right Ron. Gary is a patriot,” Clarence added. “I wonder if I’ll get a cell with a window.”

“All the same, I think we should get the hell outta Dodge,” Ron suggested.

“We already did that, remember?” Gary laughed. “You said so. All right, we’ll leave tomorrow and take turns driving. We can be in Palmdale in 48 hours driving around the clock.”

The next morning, they got on I-20 and headed west, stopping only to relieve themselves and occasionally for fuel. That was a lot of stops because of Ron’s ‘water pills’. But, they were back in Palmdale in time to catch the coverage of the president’s funeral and see a rebroadcast of Edward’s swearing in. Edwards made a speech, if you could call it that, vowing to bring the terrorists who had shot the plane down to justice. This was just another example, he claimed, firearms in the hands of the American public being responsible for another tragedy. He called for the banning of all firearms in private hands. That’s right John, everyone has a Stinger or two in their basement or gun cabinet.

Congress wasn’t convinced. Their mail, the telegrams, the emails and the phone calls were running 10 to 1 against their previous bill. It was probably some gun nut that had shot the president’s plane down, too. They introduced a bill, all right. It repealed everything back to and including the original AWB, pretty surprising for a Democratic Con-

gress. The measure passed by a 75% margin in both houses of Congress and when Edwards vetoed the bill, they overrode the veto. The character of their mail then changed. Now the public was demanding they also repeal the Gun Control Act of 1968. This time, the mail was running 20 to 1 so they repealed the law. Edwards didn't even bother to veto the bill; Congress was listening to their constituents with their hearts rather than their heads.

With the repeal of the GCA of 1968, America returned to how it had been since 1928. You didn't really need a sawed off shotgun or short barrel rifle, or machine gun or suppressor. But, if you thought you did, you could always register them, pay the \$200 and go on about your business; state law permitting, of course. Some of the state laws were so repressive that they defied reason. All a person had to do was go to the NRA's website to see how repressive they were. Our three pals were talking about moving to someplace where the laws were a little less repressive than California's, like Arizona or Nevada or Colorado. Nevada got the nod this time. Gary didn't know squat about Nevada, but his friend told him the gun laws were pretty liberal. Gary dug out his old road atlas and looked. He saw a place called the Black Rock Desert about ½ way between Winnemucca and the state line; and to the east a little ways, something called Desert Valley. Maybe one of those would do, it wouldn't hurt to look at least. Maybe his friend would give him some sound advice on the subject.

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 14 – About Nevada

“Jeez Gar-Bear, is all of Nevada owned by the government?” Ron asked.

“More than 80%, according to the Nevada Visitor’s Guide,” Gary replied. “As one of the least-populated states, and the most mountainous, Nevada is also one of the most hike able. About 85% of the state is public land, and there are more than 300 mountain ranges, many of them reaching above the timberline.”

“No wonder they have wide open gun laws, who’d want to live here?” Clarence asked.

“Lots of people moving to Nevada from California, I’ve been told,” Gary answered. “But mostly around Reno and Vegas. This state just goes straight up and straight down. Screw it, Arizona, here I come.”

“Holbrook?” Ron and Clarence groaned in unison.

“Nope. Saw me a place south of the Grand Canyon called Coconino Plateau. Isn’t owned by the government either,” Gary said. “It’s Indian country, too. There are all kinds of reservations around there. The reason the area hasn’t been more developed is a water problem. I figure I can buy 5,000 acres from the state and put in a ranch.”

“What are we going to do for water?” Clarence asked.

“Find a seep, dig a well, make an artificial lake,” Gary responded.

“They gonna let you do that?” Clarence asked.

“I don’t know and I don’t care,” Gary said, “I’m going to fence the whole thing in with a 8’ fence and put up signs that say ‘Private property-KTFO’.” (Use your imagination.)

Arizona wouldn’t sell Gary the land so he bought a section from a man looking to retire. The place had a well, too but the ranch was only 640 acres, not 5,000. The fence cost as much as the ranch, but the signs were cheap. They lived in the Airstreams while their homes were being built, er, assembled. They all put in basements (just one, apiece) and set triple-wide mobile homes on them. Gary bought a used tractor and blade and slowly pushed the dirt around to make a place for the lake he talked about.

01Oct09...

“I like this place guys,” Gary said, “Close enough to town to get supplies if we need them and pretty quiet.”

“Only since you quit putting in the lake, partner,” Ron laughed.

“Lake’s all done Ron, we just got to dig a big enough well to fill it,” Gary responded.

“Then, we can stock it and do some fishing. It’s time we got to enjoy our retirement.”

“What kind of fish you gonna put in the lake, Gary?” Clarence asked.

“I don’t care, I hate fish anyway,” Gary replied, “You and Ron figure it out. There aren’t going to be any fish until there’s water, though, so you have plenty of time.”

The well ended up being a deep well on the order of 1,500’ deep. The pump went to the bottom, if Gary understood right, and pushed the water to the surface. It was a 6” hole and put out lots of water. The lake was bigger than he thought and there were low spots on some of the places where he’d graded. He was mighty busy for a few days and even had to turn the pump off so the water wouldn’t run over. He guessed the lake was about 60’ deep in the center, but there was plenty of shallow water where they could wade out and fish. Gary told Ron and Clarence to go find some fish so that they could fish come spring. They ordered largemouth and yellow bass, crappie, and walleye. Gary loved fishing for crappie and walleye, as it turned out; he just didn’t like to eat them, especially the crappie. He said he might eat a walleye if it came out of cold water and he thanked the guys for not getting any trout, the idea of a fish that was looking at you while you ate it seemed to bother him.

Of course, you should stock a large pond/small lake in the spring, but if you do it in the winter, the fish have longer to grow. Gary’s little lake turned out to be about 160 acres, leaving plenty of room to graze a beef or two and maybe even buy back some horses. He was going with Clarence this time and make sure that ‘Salina’ was at least a mare. Ponds differ from lakes in that they are shallow enough for plants to grow from shore to shore, even in the middle of the water. Since the sunlight plants need generally doesn’t penetrate deeper than 2 meters, a pond is less than two meters in depth and a lake is deeper than two meters.

Gary also figured that they needed a root cellar to store food and such in. At least, that’s what he told Ron and Clarence. When the 100’ square root cellar was finished, Ron and Clarence checked it out. They didn’t see any roots, just a room with ‘armory’ on the door and two small rooms labeled men and women, a kitchen and 6 bedrooms. The large open area held tables, chairs, a TV and another room was labeled ‘radio shack’. The last room was labeled ‘storage’, but when they looked, all it held was Gary’s food supplies and the extra ammo. They never did find any roots.

“So, where are the roots, partner?” Ron asked.

“Well, it’s not really a root cellar guys, it’s a storm shelter,” Gary replied.

“What kind of storm shelter needs a radio room and kitchen and a Geiger counter?” Clarence asked.

“I’m not going to be caught flat footed again,” Gary said. “You should think about putting your guns in the armory, too.”

"Where did you put the generator and the propane tank?" Ron asked.

"That's separate," Gary explained, "Got its own little shelter and there's a water filtration system that draws water from the big well."

"I suppose you have an air purifier and everything, huh?" Ron continued.

"A shelter without pure air would be like a gun without bullets, Ron," Gary smugly replied.

"Didn't see no hospital or doctor's office," Clarence huffed, "Slip up did we?"

"Maybe you did, but I didn't," Gary replied. "Ran out of space, so I put all that stuff in a spare bedroom."

"Which bedroom?" Ron asked.

"The one with the medical supplies in it," Gary replied sarcastically.

"Why did you build 6 bedrooms anyway?" Clarence asked, "There are only we three couples."

"So I'd have someplace to put the medical supplies, and other stuff I forgot to make places for," Gary replied.

"That makes sense, I guess," Clarence muttered."

"So when are we going back to Texas Gar-Bear," Ron asked.

"We're not Ron," Gary laughed, "I just want him keep looking over his shoulder and always wondering if I'll be back."

"I thought you didn't like Bush," Clarence said.

"Hell, I voted for him twice, what's not to like?" Gary said, "I just wanted to let him know that not everyone agreed with some of the things he did. I agreed with Marshall, it probably was just PTSD."

"Then why all the steps to make sure they couldn't track us down?" Ron asked.

"I may be slow, but I'm not stupid," Gary replied. "Besides, they didn't know I was kidding and neither did you, am I right?"

"You sure put a lot at risk for a joke brother," Ron cracked, "I don't know whether to believe you or not. But, what you did is just sick enough to be a joke."

"I knew you'd understand, Ron," Gary said, "Really, if I never set foot in Texas again, it will be too soon."

"Then what plans do you have for this place?" Ron continued.

"We need to go back to California and get the rest of our things for one thing, and rent out the houses or sell them," Gary suggested.

"What things, Ron asked, "We brought our clothes and we have all new furniture."

"Oh our Mk-19's, Ma Deuces and other weapons," Gary explained, "And all the ammo we can carry."

"Why don't we just send Derek our Power of Attorney and let him handle that?" Clarence suggested. "And some of the Militia can bring us the other stuff, they have plenty of trailers."

"Suits me guys," Gary said, "We'll go to town, execute the PoA's and FedEx them to him. Start making up a list of what you want and I'll add it to my list."

"You have a list already?" Ron asked.

"Sure, take a look," Gary said pulling the list from his back pocket. They looked at the 3-page long list.

"Where are you going to store all of this crap," Ron asked.

"Well, I figured I'd build another root cellar," Gary said. "And let's face it, I bought the propane delivery truck and the other stuff, so I want them too."

"Better have them build two back to back 8-stall garages over the second root cellar," Ron said "and we can store all of the vehicles in one place."

"I was thinking more like a 100' square building Ron," You know me, I may want more vehicles."

"Naturally you're going to connect the root cellars with a tunnel, right?" Ron asked.

"Naturally," Gary agreed. "Anyway the 3 spare bedrooms are really a miniature hospital."

"Why," Ron scoffed, "doesn't that surprise me?"

"I wouldn't have any idea," Gary said. "And once we get the second shelter built, we can use the original storage room as a dormitory."

15Dec09...

"I think we're going to have to hire some ranch hands guys," Gary said.

"Why?" Ron and Clarence asked in unison.

"Well...I bought the adjacent section and we need someone to put in a fence and tend the livestock," Gary replied. "We need a barn, too, Clarence and I are going horse shopping."

"We are?" Clarence responded, surprised.

"Well of course, we have the tack you didn't sell like I told you to so we need horses," Gary smiled. "And, if we get Ranch hands, we're going to need horses for them too. I'd prefer to hire Indians."

"What tribe?" Ron asked.

"Comanche. You get to Texas, find some Comanche cowboys and tell them John Coffee "Jack" Hays wants to hire them," Gary said. "I guarantee you they will come running."

"Why's that?" Ron asked, "I always meant to ask you about that 3rd fake ID."

"Jack Hays was an Indian fighter and a Texas Ranger," Gary explained, "The Comanche's don't much like him. They'll come."

Preparations II – the Revolution – Chapter 15 – The People

Ron and Clarence weren't about to drive to Texas and look all over the place for a few ranch hands. They got on the phone and placed ads in several Texas papers.

“Employment opportunity for a few good men. We need several cattlemen of Comanche heritage. Married men with families only. Late 30's to mid-40's. Small northern Arizona ranch. Military veterans only. Good pay. Contact JC Hays. 1-602-555-1212”

The phone number was a cell phone; they didn't bother putting in regular phones. Besides, they had the satellite phones and used one of them to access the net. And, the generator? They were brand new Cummins diesel 230kw units set up in a modular configuration that powered the whole ranch. While a single generator would have supplied more power than our three friends could ever possibly use, Gary had all of that blood money burning a hole in his pocket. He had the Cummins dealer install a modular set up controlled by a computer. They would normally run one generator set and if demand exceeded the available power, the second would kick in and the third if it was necessary. The 4th was a replacement.

While the sets Gary bought were the DSHAD rated at 209kw prime and 230kw standby, he was looking ahead. The best he could understand was that each unit was good for a minimum of 500 amps prime power. And that meant they could power approximately twenty buildings. He ordered the F173 - Quiet Site II Second Stage and 24 hour dual wall day tanks with the 500 gallon subbase fuel tanks. They were kept topped off from the large storage tank manifold with electric fuel pumps.

Because they had the huge generator setup, and natural gas was unavailable, a pair of 30,000 gallon propane tanks were purchased and buried. Diesel storage looked as if he could burn up more of the blood money and he buried 5 40,000 gallon Containment Solutions double walled fiberglass tanks which were plumber together in a manifold to serve all the buildings for the present and future.

The plumbing contractor had put in the septic system at the same time the well was drilled and it would handle the effluent for up to 25 buildings. Commercial power was available and it was routed through a massive ATS,

Like Ron and Clarence didn't know what Gar-Bear was up to. Hah! They talked about it, decided he was at it again and just kept their mouths shut. Real good acting job they done when they'd realized early on that the root cellar was a bomb shelter, too. They figured they deserved an Oscar for that performance.

The papers had almost refused to take the ads because they claimed they violated the EEO laws. Ron had bluffed his way through claiming that it was going to be an Indian heritage project and the each of the criteria was a legitimate condition of employment. By early March 2010, they had four families lined up to move to the ranch. They put in 4 more triplewides, on basements, finished up the second root cellar, had the huge gar-

age put in and had hosted the folks from California. They were on a roll.

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Funny, none of the new cousins even brought up the JC Hays name. Although the tribe came to be known historically as Comanche, they called themselves Nermernuh, or "The People." In 1995 the Comanche had an enrolled tribal population of 9,722 scattered across the United States. For them the pow-wow, or dance gathering, had become an important method of maintaining Comanche kinship. The People are also united by pride in their rich Comanche heritage, an element that has remained constant through years of tumultuous change. They had long since anglicized their names, to blend in. The four men were all cowhands and willing to work hard, considering the handsome wage Ron offered and the free housing.

"Gentlemen, our first order of business is putting in shelter for the livestock, fencing the second section and acquiring horses," Gary said.

"You sure weren't kidding about a small ranch," Bill Parker, the oldest of the four remarked, "Down in Texas, this spread would barely qualify as a garden plot."

The other men were Jonas Parker, Robert Parker and James Parker and they insisted that they were not related except in heritage. Bill being the oldest was designated as foreman and Gary told him to work with the contractor to put in shelter for the livestock. Gary had a posthole digger for the 60-year-old Ford tractor and told them he wanted every third fence post to be a wood post. The bottom half of the fence was to be pig wire with 3 strands of barbed wire above it.

"What's with the Cyclone fence?" Robert asked, "This place looks like a military post."

"We like our privacy," Ron said.

"Didn't see any power lines, where do you get the electricity?" One of them asked.

"The power lines are buried and we have our own generator bank." Clarence replied.

"What about phones?" another asked.

"Cell phone service is spotty, so there's a satellite phone in each home," Gary explained, "Along with a computer hooked into our network. Take it easy on phone usage; it costs \$3 a minute for calls. The other phone is for ranch calls; we have our own phone system."

"What about schools and such?" James asked.

"You can home school the children, haul them 30 miles to a school, or I'll hire a certified teacher. Of course, there's always the Indian School in Phoenix," Gary replied.

"If it's all the same to you, we'll take the teacher," Bill said.

"So who's the boss here?" Robert asked, "The ad said something about JC Hays?"

"We're a corporation, named The Three Amigos, Inc." Gary explained.

"I understand you want horses?" Bill asked.

"Pintos or Paints," Gary said, "We have to keep up an illusion that this is an Indian heritage project."

"Well if it's not an Indian heritage project, just what is it?" Bill quickly asked.

"Let's just say it's a specialized retirement community," Gary answered.

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04Jul10...

Gary had the lawyer down in Phoenix dealing with the state and they had worked out an agreement for Gary to purchase the 7 adjoining sections, putting the original section right smack dab in the middle. The attorney had persuaded the state that it was a retirement community development. Under Edward's hands off policy, the economy was turning around too, and gold was down to \$800 or so an ounce. According to the satellite TV, former President Bush, the younger, had been briefly hospitalized for what was described as a nervous disorder.

And Derek called to wish his Dad a happy 4th. He'd hemmed and hawed but finally admitted that things weren't too hot in Palmdale. Gary suggested that he sell the houses and generators and pack it in and move to Arizona. He should sell the propane tanks, too because there was always a market for used propane tanks. Be sure, Gary said, to clean out that armory and bring the 4th hummer and the 5-ton trucks. Gary immediately contracted for 4 more basements and 4 more triple wides. The barn was done, the section fenced and they had a nice herd of horses, including some older mares for the three old geezers and their wives.

Four basements? You're forgetting Lorrie and Amy. Ron's kids were welcome, excluding Kevin. Perhaps that's what the backup electrical system was so large. The next 'large' purchase was 25 cords of firewood for each home or 225 cords; 95% hardwood.

13Sep10...

The convoy of vehicles started with some moving trucks, followed by Gary's 5-ton trucks followed by Derek and Damon in their pickups. Followed by Lorrie and David in a van and Amy and the two kids in the hummer. Derek hadn't said anything about Amy and

Lorrie coming, but Sharon was sure glad to see them. Gary had 4 triple wides put in. It took a while to unload the 2 moving trucks; Gary hadn't realized they'd accumulated so many weapons and munitions. Derek mentioned that the homes had all sold well and that they were all fairly well off. The generators and tanks hadn't gone for nearly what they cost, however and the check he handed Gary wasn't that large.

"Use the fork lift and stack that stuff in the garage Derek," Gary suggested. "Our ranch hands don't know anything about the root cellars and I'd like to keep it that way for now."

"You built more bomb shelters?" Derek asked.

"No, but I sure do have a couple of nice 100' square root cellars," Gary laughed. "The garage was built above the second one."

"Yeah, I'll bet," Derek laughed.

"So what's going on in the big bad world out there?" Gary asked.

"Well, you'll be interested to know that Dubya is in the hospital," Derek commented. "Supposed to be for a nervous condition, but FOX ran a story that there had been an assassination attempt on his life around the time that Kerry was assassinated. They said he hadn't been the same since."

"Do tell," Gary said, "Hadn't heard anything about it."

"Whoever did it was pretty clever Dad, the FBI doesn't have a clue who did it," Derek said.

"What about the people who killed Kerry?" Gary asked.

"Same story, not a clue," Derek said.

"Some people just think they can go around killing president's Derek, you know how it is," Gary replied.

"No, I don't," Derek said, "But maybe someday I'll understand. Wasn't that around the time that the three of you took off for a few days?"

"You know, I think you're right Derek," Gary said, "I seem to recall getting home right after the assassination of the President."

"But you wouldn't know anything about it right?" Derek said.

"Right, Ron and Clarence and I were up here in northern Arizona looking for someplace to move to," Gary said.

“Who is the woman in the other trailer Dad?” Damon asked.

“She’s a school teacher Damon. She teaches the ranch hands’ kids,” Gary explained.

“What’s her name?” Damon asked.

“Stacy,” Gary said, “She has quite a head of red hair doesn’t she?”

“Nice legs,” Damon observed.

“Really?” Gary said, “I didn’t get that far. Her son’s name is Ryan.”

“Married?” Damon asked.

“Widowed,” Gary said.

01Nov10...

Gary had thought it over and had another triplewide put in. He figured that the school-teacher needed something bigger than an Airstream to live in. He had the contractor erect a one-room schoolhouse too, to get the kids out of the garage. Nice little community they had here. They got an irrigation system going for some of the land and grew crops to feed the livestock and plant gardens. But mostly, the men just went riding, finally used to riding horses. They fished some, but threw them back to grow. It certainly was peaceful out here in the middle of nowhere. Their most frequent visitor was the propane deliveryman.

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My Fellow Americans, Edwards opened,

Yesterday, Nov. 7, 2010 - a date which will live in infamy - the country of South Korea was suddenly and deliberately attacked by North Korea.

The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of North Korea, was still in conversation with the government and its leaders looking toward the removal of nuclear weapons from that country.

Instead, the government of North Korea attacked South Korea without warning. As you may recall, General Wesley Clark recalled our troops from Korea during the brief time he was in power. President George Bush continued that policy.

It is my intention to support the government of South Korea. To that end, I have ordered the 7th Fleet into Korean waters and will immediately begin dispatching several Divisions of Army and Marines to Japan where they will mount an invasion of Korea to re-

capture the country.

The People's Republic of China should be forewarned that if they intervene in this conflict, we will respond as if it were an attack made directly on the United States by the People's Republic.

Thank you and good night.

"Well, Gar-Bear," Ron said, "What do you think of that?"

"I think he should get a new speech writer, Ron," Gary laughed, "He started out sounding like FDR and ended up sounding like JFK. Hush up, I want to see how CNN spins this one."

"...and President Edwards used the very words of his Democratic predecessors, FDR and JFK when he announced the attack," the commentator said. "You heard the president mention former president Bush. Unfortunately, the former president remains hospitalized with what some have suggested are paranoid delusions. Informed sources tell CNN that Mr. Bush believes that former Governor Schwarzenegger attacked him and intends to return to finish the job. The former Governor could not be reached for comment. His office said that they didn't know where the former Governor was; he'd just told them, 'I'll be back' and left."

Ron was laughing so hard tears were running down his face. Clarence just had a grin from ear-to-ear. Gary, by contrast, had gone to his desk and pulled out the list of their emergency supplies. He needed to do some shopping from the looks of it and fast. With the population of the ranch, they had only a little over a month's worth of food supplies and not nearly enough propane.